THE TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

T·L·S

24 DECEMBER 1971

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INDEX OF BOOKS REVIEWED

S. Abbott (Editor): *The Prevention of Racial Discrimination in Britain* .. 1600
Anthology of Troubadour Lyric Poetry 1602
N. Azikiwe: *My Odyssey* 1613
R. Baorlein: *Nijinsky* 1615
R. Barker: *The Schneider Trophy Races* 1614
M. W. Barley: *The House and Home* .. 1614
J. Berryman: *Love and Fame* 1602
K. von Beyme: *Die politische Elite in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* .. 1614
H. Bloom: *The Visionary Company* .. 1603
A. Bowness: *Gauguin* 1598
M. Brander: *Hunting and Shooting* .. 1611
P. Cabanne: *Dialogues with Marcel Duchamp* 1598
M. T. Clanchy (Editor): *Civil Pleas of the Wiltshire Eyre, 1249* 1614
J. Coplans and others: *Andy Warhol* 1598
M. Deacon: *Scientists and the Sea 1650-1900* 1611
L. de Vries: *Victorian Inventions* .. 1615
L. Diamant: *Television's Classic Commercials* 1604
S. Dougal: *The Nun-Runners* 1615
P. Doughty and others: *Language in Use* 1610
J. D. Douglas (Editor): *Understanding Everyday Life* 1600
R. and E. Frow and M. Katanka: *Strikes* 1608
G. M. Gatti (Editor): *La Musica*, Parts I and II 1609
W. Gaunt: *Turner* 1598
R. Gibson and K. Roberts: *British Portrait Painters* 1598
G. L. Griest: *Mudie's Circulating Library and the Victorian Novel* .. 1604
R. Hahn: *The Anatomy of a Scientific Institution* 1599
C. Hampden-Turner: *Radical Man* .. 1600
G. Hanley: *Warriors and Strangers* .. 1613
J. Harris: *A Catalogue of British Drawings for Architecture, Decoration, Sculpture and Landscape Gardening 1150-1900 in American Collections* .. 1598
M. J. Hill and R. M. Issacharoff: *Community Action and Race Relations* .. 1600
B. Hobson and R. Obojski: *Illustrated Encyclopaedia of World Coins* .. 1615
H. M. Hyde: *Stalin* 1596
B. L. Joseph: *Shakespeare's Eden* .. 1603
G. Katkov and H. Shukman: *Lenin's Path to Power* 1596
X. J. Kennedy: *Breaking and Entering* 1602
K. J. King: *Pan-Africanism and Education* 1613
D. King-Hele: *Shelley* 1603
H. T. Lenton: *American Fleet and Escort Destroyers* 1614
R. Manvell and H. Fraenkel: *Hess* .. 1613
H. Marsh: *Documents of Liberty* .. 1614
Mathematics in the Archaeological and Historical Sciences 1599
E. H. Methvin: *The Riot Makers* .. 1600
A. A. Milne: *Winnie-the-Pooh* .. 1614
Lady Montagu of Beaulieu: *To the Manor Born* 1614
D. von Mohrenschildt: *The Russian Revolution of 1917* 1596
M. C. Morgan: *Lenin* 1596
W. Nash: *Our Experience of Language* 1610
D. Nichols and J. A. L. Cooke: *The Oxford Book of Invertebrates* .. 1611
W. Pater: *Leonardo da Vinci* 1598
R. Penrose: *Picasso* 1598
The Diary of Samuel Pepys. Vols IV and V 1603
F. Pessoa: *Selected Poems* 1602
G. R. Petty, Jr, and W. M. Gibson: *Project Occult* 1610
S. Plath: *Crossing the Water. Winter Trees* 1602
J. Pope-Hennessy: *Anthony Trollope* 1605
A. Preston: *"V and W" Class Destroyers* 1614
J. Racine: *Phèdre* 1602
E. H. Ramsden: *Michelangelo* .. 1598
J. R. Ravetz: *Scientific Knowledge and its Social Problems* 1599
K. Roberts: *Bruegel* 1598
R. ap Roberts: *Trollope* 1605
A. Rosmer: *Lenin's Moscow* .. ..
V. H. Rothwell: *British War Aims and Peace Diplomacy 1914-1918* .. ..
G. Sajer: *The Forgotten Soldier* .. ..
P. H. Sawyer: *The Age of the Vikings*
A. Shuttlewood: *UFO's* .. ..
C. Smith and others: *Collins Spanish-English English-Spanish Dictionary*
K. Sontheimer: *Grundzüge des politischen Systems der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* .. ..
O. Stokke (Editor): *Reporting Africa*
P. Street: *Animal Weapons* .. ..
J. Sunderland: *Constable* .. ..
G. Snyder: *Regarding Wave* .. ..
C. Thomas: *Britain and Ireland in Early Christian Times* .. .. ..
L. Trotsky: *On Lenin* .. .. ..
P. Valéry: *Le Cimetière marin* .. ..
G. O. Vinokur: *The Russian Language*
D. Waldman: *Roy Lichtenstein* ..
G. Walker (Editor): *Directory of Libraries and Special Collections on Eastern Europe and the U.S.S.R.* .. ..
R. R. Wark: *Ten British Pictures* ..
F. R. Wasserman: *Shelley* .. ..
A. Werth: *Russia: The Post-War Years*
M. L. West: *Early Greek Philosophy and the Orient* .. .. ..
P. Whitting (Editor): *Byzantium* ..
E. T. Williams and H. M. Palmer (Editors): *The Dictionary of National Biography* .. ..
M. Wright: *Cuckfield* .. .. ..

FICTION

J. M. Arguedas: *El zorro de arriba y el zorro de abajo* .. ..
J. Burnley (Editor): *Penguin Modern Stories 9* .. ..
J. Dymoke: *Henry of the High Rock* ..
G. Gordon: *The Umbrella Man* ..
S. Hignett: *A Cut Loaf* .. ..
H. Porter: *Selected Stories* .. ..
C. Simon: *The Battle of Pharsalus* ..

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T·L·S

THE TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

FRIDAY 31 DECEMBER 1971 · No. 3,644 · Price 10p

Georges Sorel

BY ISAIAH BERLIN

...et remains an anomalous ...ge. The other ideologists ...d prophets of the nineteenth ...n have been safely docketed ...dassified. The doctrines, ...es, personalities of Mill, ...s, Comte, Darwin, ...ealy, Wagner, Nietzsche, ...Marx, have been safely placed ...ter respective shelves in the ...ea of the history of ideas. Sorel ...s, as he was in his lifetime, un...ed; claimed and repudiated ...ly the right and by the left. ...s a bold and brilliant innovator ...ating genius as his handful ...iples declare? Or a mere ...es journalist, as Mr Lichtheim ...him? A "pessimist moaning for ...", in G. D. H. Cole's contemp...s phrase? Or, with Marx, the ...riginal thinker (according to ...e socialism has ever had? Or ...torious muddle-head, as ...n unkindly described him? I ...volunteer an answer: I only ...to say something about his prin...ideas, and also—to employ that ...abused word—the relevance of ...ideas to our time.

...ges Sorel was born in 1847 in ...ourg. His father was an un...ful businessman, and the ...y was forced to practise extreme ...ny. According to his cousin, ...torian Albert Sorel, Georges ...d early showed exceptional ...matical gifts. In 1865 he be...a student at the Ecole Poly...que in Paris, and five years ...entered the Department of ...c Works (Ponts et Chaussées) ...ngineer. During the next ...years he was posted to various ...cial towns. During the debacle ...70 and 1871 he was in Corsica. ...he fell ill in a hotel in Lyon, ...was nursed by a servant called ...e David, a devoutly religious, ...literate peasant from the ...ins of Savoy, with whom he set ...a household. In his letters he ...to her as his wife, but in fact ...ars never to have married her, ...ably out of deference to the ...s of his family, which was evi...ly shocked by this *mésalliance*. ...s an entirely happy and devoted ...onship. He taught her, and ...from her, and, after her death ...98, wore a sacred image that she ...given him and worshipped her ...ory for the rest of his days.

...il the age of forty his life had ...that of a typical minor French ...nment official, peaceful, pro...al and obscure. In 1889 his ...book was published. In 1892, ...then forty-five years old, ...attained the rank of Chief ...eer and been rewarded with ...rank of Chevalier of the Légion ...nneur, he suddenly resigned. ...this moment his public life ...s. His mother had left him a ...ll legacy, and this enabled him to ...e to Paris. He settled in a quiet ...rb, Boulogne-sur-Seine, where ...lived until his death thirty years ...in 1922. In 1895 he started to ...ribute to left-wing journals, and ...then on became one of the ...controversial political writers ...rance.

...e appeared to have no fixed posi... His critics often accused him ...rsuing an erratic course: a Legi...ist in his youth, and still a tradi...alist in 1889, he was by 1894 ...Marxist. In 1896 he wrote with ...iration about Vico. By 1898, ...fluenced by Croce, and also by ...ard Bernstein, he began to criti...e Marxism and at about the same ...e fell deeply under the spell of ...ri Bergson. He was a Dreyfusard ...1899, a revolutionary syndicalist during the following decade. By 1909 he was a sworn enemy of the Dreyfusards, and, in the following two or three years, an ally of the royalists who edited the *Action Française* and a supporter of the mystical nationalism of Barrès. He wrote with admiration about Mussolini's militant socialism in 1912, and in 1919 with still greater admiration about Lenin, ending with wholehearted support for Bolshevism and, in the last years of his life, an unconcealed admiration for the Duce.

What credence could be placed in the thought of a man whose political views veered so violently and unpredictably? He did not claim to be consistent. "I write from day to day", he said in 1903 to his faithful correspondent, the Italian philosopher Benedetto Croce, "following the need of the moment." Sorel's writings have no shape or system, and he detested it in others. He was a compulsive and passionate talker, and, as is at times the case with famous talkers—Diderot, Coleridge, Herzen, Bakunin—his writings re[illegible] episodic, [illegible] finished, fragmentary, at best sharp, polemical essays or pamphlets provoked by some immediate occasion, not intended to be fitted into a body of coherent, developed doctrine, and not capable of it. Nevertheless, there is a central thread that connects everything that Sorel wrote and said, if not a doctrine, then an attitude, a position, the expression of a singular temperament, of an unaltering view of life. His ideas, which beat like hail-stones against all accepted doctrines and institutions, fascinated both his friends and his opponents, and do so still not only because of their intrinsic quality and power, but because what in his day was confined to small coteries of intellectuals has now grown to world-wide proportions. In his lifetime Sorel was looked on as, at best, a polemical journalist, an autodidact with a powerful pen and occasional flashes of extraordinary insight, too wayward and perverse to claim for long the attention of serious and busy [illegible] more formidable than most of the respected social thinkers of his day, whom he ignored or else regarded with unconcealed disdain.

• • •

The ideas of every philosopher concerned with human affairs in the end rest on his conception of what man is and can be. To understand such thinkers, it is more important to grasp this central notion or image, which may be implicit, but determines their picture of the world, than even the most forceful arguments with which they defend their views and refute actual and possible objections. Sorel was dominated by one *idée maîtresse*: that man is a creator, fulfilled only when he creates, and not when he passively receives or drifts unresisting with the current. His mind is not a mechanism or organism responsive to stimuli, analysable, describable and predictable by the sciences of man. He is, for Sorel, in the first place, a producer who expresses himself in and through his work, an innovator whose activity alters the material provided by nature, material that he seeks to mould in accordance with an inwardly conceived, spontaneously generated, image or pattern. The productive activity itself brings this pattern to birth and alters it as it fulfils itself freely, obedient to no law, being conceived as a kind of natural spring of creative energy which can be grasped by inner feeling and not by scientific observation or logical analysis. All other views of what men are, or could be, are fallacious. History shows that men are essentially seekers not of happiness or peace or knowledge or power over others, or salvation in another life—at least these are not men's primary purposes; where they are so, it is because men have degenerated from their true humanity, because education or environment or circumstances have distorted their will or character or rendered it impotent or vicious.

Man, at his best, that is, at his most human, seeks in the first place to fulfil himself, individually and with those close to him, in spontaneous, unhindered, creative activity, in work that consists of the imposition of his personality on a recalcitrant environment. Sorel quotes his political enemy Clemenceau as saying: "Everything that lives, resists." He believed in this proposition as strongly as he believed in anything [illegible] to choose and not be chosen for, to impose form on the chaos that we find in the world of nature and the world of thought—that is the end of both art and science and belongs to the essence of man as such. He resists every force that seeks to reduce his energy, to rob him of his independence and his dignity, to kill the will, to crush everything in him that struggles for unique self-expression and reduce it to uniformity, impersonality, monotony, and, ultimately, extinction. Man lives fully only in and by his works, not by passive enjoyment or the peace and security that he might find by surrender to external pressures, or habit, or convention, by failure to use for his own freely conceived goals the mechanism of the laws of nature to which he is inevitably subject.

This is, of course, not a new idea. It lies at the heart of the great revolt against rationalism and the Enlightenment identified particularly with French civilization, that animated the more extreme German Protestant sects after the Reformation, and which, towards the end of the eighteenth century, took the form of celebrating the primacy of the human will against material forces and calm, rational knowledge alike. This is not the place in which to discuss the origins of Romanticism. But one cannot understand Sorel, or the impact of his views, unless one realizes that what caused the ferment in his mind was a passionate conviction which he shares with German Romanticism, that the pursuit of peace or happiness or profit, and concern with power or possessions, or social status or a quiet life, is a contemptible betrayal of what any man, if he takes thought, knows to be the true end of human life: the attempt to make something worthy of survival, the effort to be and do something, and to respect such effort in others. The notion of the dignity of labour, of the right to work, as

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

A new translation of 'Faust' 1625
Stephen Spender 1629
Jack Yeats 1632
R. D. Laing and Erving Goffman 1633
Mercenaries with the Moghuls 1634
Brian Magee's 'Modern British Philosophy' .. 1635
Letters on T. S. Eliot, Asturias, Klee, Flecker .. 1630

The Press 1623, Biography and Memoirs 1624, Literature and Criticism 1625, History 1626, Architecture 1627, The Arts 1632, Social Studies 1633, Colonial History 1634, Philosophy and Theology 1635, Education 1636, London 1637, Natural History 1637, Fiction 1638

opposed to the mere Pauline duty to engage in it, which is at the heart of much modern socialism, springs from this romantic conception, which German thinkers, notably Herder and Fichte, sons of earnest Lutheran pietists, impressed upon the European consciousness.

Sorel's violent and lifelong disgust with the life of the Parisian bourgeoisie of his time, in its own way as ferocious as that of Flaubert with whom temperamentally he has something in common, is bound up with a Jansenist hatred of the twin evils of hedonism and materialism. The opportunism and corruption of French political life in the early years of the Third Republic, together with the sense of national humiliation after 1870, may have been a traumatic experience for him, as for many Frenchmen. But it seems unlikely that he would have felt differently in the greedy and competitive Paris of Louis Philippe or the plutocratic and pleasure-seeking Paris of the Second Empire. An agonized sense of suffocation in the commercialized, jaunty, insolent, dishonourable, easy-going, cowardly, mindless, bourgeois society of the nineteenth century fills the writings of the age: the works of Proudhon, Carlyle, Ibsen, Marx, Nietzsche, almost the whole of Russian literature, are one vast indictment of it. This is the tradition to which Sorel belongs from the beginning to the end of his life as a writer. The corruption of public life appears to him to have gone deeper than during the decadence of classical Greece, or the end of the Roman Empire. Parliamentary democracy, with its fraudulence and hypocrisy, appeared to him to be an odious insult to human dignity, a mockery of the proper ends of man. Democratic politics resembled a huge stock exchange in which votes were bought and sold without shame or fear, men were bamboozled or betrayed by scheming politicians, ruthless bankers, crooked businessmen, *avocasserie et écrivasserie*—lawyers, journalists, professors, all scrambling for money, recognition, power, in a world of contemptible fools and cunning knaves, deceivers and deceived, living off the exploited workers "in a democratic bog" in a Europe "stupefied by humanitarianism".

Life is a battle

The Western tradition of social thought had been sustained by two central doctrines. The first taught that the ultimate causes of human misery and vice and folly were ignorance and mental laziness. Reality, it was held by rationalists from Plato to Comte, is a single, intelligible structure: to understand it and explain it, and to understand one's own nature and its place in this structure—this alone can reveal what, in a specific situation, can, and what cannot be realized. Once the facts and the laws that govern them are known to him, no man, desiring as he does happiness or harmony or wisdom or virtue, can pursue any but the sole correct path to his goal that his knowledge reveals to him. To be a rational, even a normal, human being, is to seek one, or several, of a limited number of the natural ends of human life. Only ignorance of what they are, or of what are the correct means for their attainment, can lead to misery or vice or failure. The scientific or naturalistic version of this doctrine animated the Enlightenment and the forms which it took in the two centuries that followed until our own day.

Sorel rejected this entire approach. He saw no reason for believing that the world was a rational harmony, or that man's true perfection depended on understanding of the proper place assigned to him in it by his creator—a personal deity or an impersonal nature. Influenced by both Marx and the half-forgotten Italian thinker, Vico, of whom he was one of the few perceptive readers in the nineteenth century, Sorel believed that all that man possessed he owed to his own unflagging labour. Certainly natural science was a triumph of human effort; but it was not a transcription or map of nature, as the positivists had claimed in the eighteenth century; they, and their modern disciples, were mistaken about this. There were two natures, artificial nature, the nature of science—a system of idealized entities—atoms, electric charges, mass, energy and the like—fictions composed out of observed uniformities, particularly in regions relatively remote from man's daily concerns, like the idealized entities of astronomy, deliberately adapted to mathematical treatment that enabled men to identify some of the furniture of the universe, and to predict and, indeed, control parts of it. The concepts and categories in terms of which this science had been constructed, were conditioned by human aims: it selected from the universe those aspects that were of interest to men and only those that possessed sufficient regularity to make them capable of generalization. This, of course, was a stupendous achievement, but an achievement of the creative imagination, not a reproduction of the structure of reality, not a map, still less a picture, of what there was.

Outside this set of formulae, of imaginary entities and mathematical relationships in terms of which the system was constructed, there was "natural" nature—the real thing—chaotic, terrifying, compounded of ungovernable forces, against which man had to struggle, which, if he was to survive and create, he had at least in part to subdue; with the help, indeed, of his sciences; but the symmetry, the coherence was an attribute of the first, or artificial, nature, the construction of his intellect, something that was not found but made. Hence the assumption that reality was a marvellously made harmonious whole, a rational structure whose logical necessity was revealed to reason, a coherent system which a rational being could not think or wish to be otherwise, and still remain rational, and in which, therefore, it must necessarily feel happy and fulfilled—all this was an enormous fallacy. Nature is not a perfect machine, nor an exquisite organism, nor a rational system; it is a savage chaos: science is the art of dealing with it as best we can. When we extend such manipulation to men as well, we degrade and dehumanize them, for men are not objects but subjects of action. If Christianity has taught us anything, it has made us realize that the only thing of absolute value in the universe is the human soul, the only thing that acts, that imagines, that creates, that resists the impersonal forces which work against it and, unless they are resisted, enslave us and ultimately grind us into dust. This is the menace that perpetually hangs over us. Consequently life is a perpetual battle.

To deny this truth is shallow optimism characteristic of the shallow eighteenth century for which Sorel, like Carlyle, felt a lifelong contempt. The laws of nature are not descriptions, they are, as he came to learn from William James (and perhaps also from Marx), strategic weapons. Croce had taught him that our categories are categories of action, that they alter what we call reality as the purposes of our active selves alter: they do not establish timeless truths as the positivists maintained. "We consider as matter, or as the base, that which escapes, less or more completely, from our will. The form is rather what corresponds to our freedom." Systems, theories, unrelated to action, attempting to transcend experience, that which professors and intellectuals are so good at, are only abstractions into which men escape, to avoid facing the chaos of reality; scientific (and political) utopias are compounded out of them; the pseudo-scientific predictions about our future by which such utopias are bolstered, are nothing but modern forms of astrology. When such schemes are applied to human beings they can do dreadful damage. To confuse our own constructions and inventions with eternal laws or divine decrees is one of the most fatal delusions of men: this is what had happened in the French Revolution. The confusion of the two natures, the real and the artificial, is bad enough. But the *philosophes* were not, by and large, even genuine scientists: only social and political theorists who talked about science without practising it: the *Encyclopédie* had not improved anyone's actual knowledge of, or skill at, anything. Ideological patter, optimistic journalism about the uses of science, was not science.

This only leads to positivism and bureaucracy, *la petite science*, and when theory is ruthlessly applied to human affairs, its result is a fearful despotism. Sorel speaks almost the language of William Blake. The Tree of Knowledge has killed the Tree of Life. Robespierre and the Jacobins were fanatical pedants who tried to reduce human life to rules that seemed to them based on objective truths; the institutions they created crushed spontaneity and invention, enslaved and maimed the creative will of man.

Men whose essence, for Sorel, is to be active beings are perpetually menaced by two equally fatal dangers: a Scylla and a Charybdis. Scylla is weariness, the loss of nerve, decadence, when men relax from effort, return to the fleshpots, or else fall into quietism and become the victims of the trickery of the clever operators who destroy all honour, energy, integrity, independence, and substitute the rule of cunning and fraud, the dead hand of bureaucracy, laws that can be turned to their advantage by unscrupulous operators, aided and abetted by an army of experts—prostitutes and lackeys of those in power, or idle entertainers and sycophantic parasites, like Voltaire and Diderot "the immoral buffoons of a degenerate aristocracy", bourgeois who aspire to ape the tastes of an idle and pleasure-loving nobility. Charybdis is the despotism of fanatical theorists—"the savage frenzy of an optimist maddened by sudden resistance to his plans", who is ready to butcher the present "to create the happiness of the future on its bones". These alternations mark the unhappy eighteenth century.

Birth of the new man

How are men to be rescued from the horns of this dilemma? Only by moral strength: by the development of new men, fully-formed human beings not obsessed by fear and greed, men who have not had their imagination and emotion fettered by doctrinaires or rotted by intellectuals. Sorel's vision resembles that of Tolstoy and Nietzsche when they were young—of the fullness of life, as it was once lived by the Homeric Greeks, free from the corrosive effect of the critical doubt. It is not the possession of common ideas, convictions bred by reasoning, that creates true human bonds, but common life and common effort. Thus the family is the true basis of all association, and in ancient times the tribe, and the *polis*, in which cooperation is instinctive and spontaneous and does not depend on rules or contracts or invented arrangements. Associations for the sake of profit, of utility, resting on some artificial agreement, as the political and economic institutions of the capitalist system plainly do, stifle the sense of common humanity and destroy human dignity by generating a spirit of competitive opportunism. Athens created immortal masterpieces until Socrates came, and spun theories, and played a nefarious part in the disintegration of that closely knit heroic community by sowing doubt, by undermining established values which spring from the profoundest and most life-enhancing instincts of men.

Sorel began to write in this fashion when he was still a municipal engineer in Perpignan; his friend Daniel Halévy assures us that he had not then read a line of Nietzsche whom he later came to admire. But his charge against Socrates is identical; both Nietzsche and Sorel take the side of his accusers, for it was Socrates, and his disciple Plato, arch-intellectuals, who planted the life-destroying seeds that led to the glorification of abstractions, utopian schemes, academies, contemplative or critical philosophies, and so the decline of Greek society and Greek genius.

Can decadence be averted? Where is permanent salvation to be sought? There is a second ancient doctrine in which men have traditionally sought reassurance: teleology. History, it was thought, would be meaningless—merely a causal sequence, or a chaos of unrelated episodes, if it lacked some ultimate purpose. This was considered unthinkable: reason rejects the notion of a mere collocation of "brute" facts with no inner connexion; there must be advance or growth towards the fulfilment of some goal or pattern; the mind demands some guarantee that, despite all accidents and collapses, the story will have a happy ending; either Providence is leading us towards it in its own inscrutable fashion; or else history is conceived as the self-realization from stage to stage of the great cosmic spirit of which all men and all their institutions, and perhaps all nature, is the changing and progressive expression. Or, perhaps, it is human reason itself that cannot and will not forever be frustrated, and must late or soon, triumph over all obstacles, both external and self-generated, and build a world in which men have become everything that, as rational creatures, they consciously or unconsciously seek to be. In its metaphysical, or mystical or secular forms, this amalgam of Hebraic faith and Aristotelian metaphysics dominated the ideas of the last three centuries and gave confidence to many who might otherwise have despaired.

These central intellectual traditions—the Greek doctrine of salvation by knowledge and the Judeo-Christian doctrine of history as theodicy—to which men have pinned their hopes, were all but rejected by Sorel. All his life he believed in two absolutes: that of science, and that of morality. Science, even though, or perhaps because, it is a human artifice, enables us to classify, predict, control certain events. The concepts and categories in terms of which science puts its questions may vary with cultural change: the objectivity and reliability of the answers do not. But it is a weapon not an ontology: not an analysis of reality. The great machine of science does not yield answers to problems of metaphysics or morality: to reduce the central problems of human life to problems of means, of technology, is not to understand what they are. To regard technical progress as being identical with, or even as a guarantee of, cultural progress, is moral blindness. Sorel devoted a series of essays to demonstrating the absurdity of the idea of general human progress which springs from confusion of technology with life, or the absurd claim first advanced by writers in the late seventeenth century of their inevitable superiority to the ancients. As for religious or metaphysical belief in human perfectibility, that is only a pathetic clutching at straws, a refuge of the weak.

Neither science nor history offer comfort: Turgot and Condorcet and their nineteenth-century disciples are poor, deluded optimists who believe that history is on our side; so it will be, if we make it so, if we fight the good fight against the oppressors and exploiters, the dreary, life-destroying levellers, the masters and the slaves, and protect the sublime and the heroic against democrats and plutocrats, pedants and philistines.

Sorel has no doubt about what is health, and what is disease, whether in individuals or in societies. The Homeric Greeks lived in the light of values without which a society could not be creative or possess a sense of grandeur. They admired courage, strength, justice, loyalty, sacrifice, above all the struggle itself; freedom for them was not an ideal but a reality: the feeling of successful effort. Then (and this probably comes from Vico) came scepticism, sophistry, ease of life, democracy, decadence. Greek society disintegrated and was conquered. Rome, too, was once heroic, but it had given in to legilism and the bureaucratization of life, the late Empire was a cage in which human beings felt stifled.

It was the early Church that had once held high the flag of man. What the early Christians believed is less important than the intensity of a faith that did not allow the corrosive intellect to penetrate. Above all, these men refused to compromise. The early Christians could have saved themselves from per- tion by coming to terms with Roman bureaucrats. They pref faith, sacrifice and integrity. cessions, Sorel repeats, always, i end, lead to self-destruction. only hope lies in ceaseless resi to forces that seek to weaken you instinctively know that you by. When the Church triumphed made its peace with the world, came infected by it and the degenerated: the Barbarians converted to Christianity, but worldly Christianity, and fell decay.

Moreover, the heroic Christia of the martyrs is a defence again decadent state, but it is itself sically socially destructive. tians (and Stoics too) are producers: the Gospels, unlik Old Testament or Greek litera are addressed to beggars and rites; a society indifferent to content with its daily bread, no room for vigorous, creative Christianity, like every ideolog its secular imitation—the socialism of a later day—"cut links between social life and the sowing everywhere germs of quie despair, death". Too little accorded to Caesar, too much to Church—an organization of sumers, not (in Sorel's sense) producers. Sorel wishes to retu the values of the hardy peasants or the Greek *polis*, merely to question them was sidered subversive. He is conce neither with happiness nor salva only with the quality of life with what used to be called (which in his case resembles Re sance *virtù*). Like the Jans like Kant and the Romantics, values motive and character. consequences and success.

Decay and revival

The accumulation of wealth in the hands of priests monks played its part in exhaustion and fall of the Ro West. But after decay there is hope of a revival: does not speak of a *ricorso*, when one of history has ended in moral ness and decadence, a new one, barian, fresh and strong, begins story again? Sorel dwells on with the enthusiasm of Nietzs He is fascinated by every exam of resolute moral resistance to deca He is fascinated by the story of Church under persecution and of Church militant; he takes interest in the Church triumphant is in connexion with movements resistance and renewal that develops (increasingly after fa under the influence of Bergson theories of which he became the famous upholder: of the social my of the permanent class war, violence, of the general strike.

Even in the darkest moments decadence, the social organism de lops antibodies to resist the dis —men who will not give in, who stand up and save the honour of human race. The dedicated mo tic orders, the saints and martyrs preserved mankind from total co tamination by late Roman socie what men today embody such qu ties, possess the *virtù* of the *condottieri* and artists of the Re sance? There may be something it in the American men of busi bold, enterprising, creative capt of industry, who make their will vail over nature and other men; they are tainted by the general ruption of capitalism of which are the leaders. There was, it see to Sorel, only one such body: who are saved by work—the work the only genuinely creative class our day. The proletarians, who not morally caught in the toils bourgeois life, appear to Sorel her endowed with a natural sens justice and humanity, incor impregnable, proof against sophistries and casuistries of intellectuals.

In the last years of the cent during the united front of the created by the Dreyfus Affair, perhaps influenced by the refor socialism of Bernstein in Germ which seemed to him to be rate based on economic Sorel supported the idea of a p cal party of the working class he accepted the position of the alist journalist, Lagardelle, to journal, *Le Mouvement Socialiste*, he contributed liberally, that it opinions that truly unite men—beliefs are a superficial possession blown about by ideologists who with words and ideas, and can shared by men of different social station who have basically nothing common with each other. Men truly made one only by real ties family, the unchanging unit of social life, as Proudhon and Le had insisted—by martyrdom in common cause, but above all by ting together, by common creation, united resistance to the pressures of inanimate nature which provide the workers with their tools, and of their masters who would rob them of the fruits of their work. The workers are not a party together by lust for power or for material goods. They class. It was the genius of Marx discovered the true nature of as defined in terms of their relationship to the productive processes society torn, but also driven forward by conflict between capitalist proletarian. Sorel never abandoned his belief in Marx, but he used doctrines selectively.

Sorel derives from Marx (reinforced by his own interpretation of his conception of man as an being, born to work and create; from this follows his right to tools, for they are an extension of nature. The working tools of day are machines. Machinery is a cement more effective, he says, than even language. All work is in essence artistic, and the day should become the vehicle of social poetry of modern producers. Human history is more than impersonal story of the evolution of technology. Inventions, discoveries, techniques, the productive forces are the activities of human beings endowed with minds but, above all, wills. Men's values, their ideas, their work, are one dynamic, organic whole. Sorel follows Vico in insisting that we are not mere victims or spectators of events, but actual originators. Marx, too, is appealed to, but he is, at times, too determinist for Sorel, especially in the versions of his more positivist interpreters—Engels, Kautsky, Plekhanov, men inclined to *la petite science*, like bourgeois economists and sociologists. Social and economic laws are not chains, not a confining framework, but guidelines for possible action, generated and shaped by, and in, action. The future is open. Sorel rejects such determinist phraseology as "tendencies working with iron necessity towards inevitable results" and the like, of which *Das Kapital* is full. Marxism "is a doctrine of life good for strong peoples; it reduces ideology to the role of a mere instrument". History for Sorel is a drama, as it was for Hegel, in which we are authors and actors: above all it is a struggle between the forces of energy and those of decay, activity and passivity, dynamic energy versus cowardice and surrender.

Marx's deepest single insight for Sorel is his notion of the class war as the matrix of all social change. Action is always a struggle: civilization for Sorel is symbolized by the sculptor who fights the marble—the resistance of the stone, resistance as such, is essential to the process of creation. In modern factories the struggle is not merely against the raw material provided by nature, but against other men who wish to extract surplus value by exploiting other men's labour power. In this struggle, men, like steel, are refined. Their courage, their self-respect, their solidarity with each other, grow. Their sense of justice develops. This justice, according to Proudhon (to whom Sorel's debt is greater than even to Marx), is something that springs from the feeling of indignation at the humiliation inflicted on others. What has been violated is what is common to all men—their humanity which is ours; the insult to human dignity is felt by the offender, by the injured man, and by the third party"; this common protest which all feel within them is the sense of justice and indignation. It is this that united some of the socialists with the liberal intellectuals against the chicanery of the army and the church during the Dreyfus case, and created Sorel's bond with Charles Péguy who was never a Marxist but was prepared to work with anyone who did not wish to see France dishonoured by a cynical miscarriage of justice. In 1899 he speaks of the "admirable ardour" with which the Allemanist workers are marching for "truth, justice, morality" by the side of Jaurès whom he was soon to attack so violently for lacking these very qualities.

Justice in particular is for Sorel an absolute value, proof against historical change. His conception of it may, as in the case of Kant and Proudhon, be rooted in a severe upbringing. Sorel dreaded sentimental humanitarianism: when people cease to feel horror at human crimes this will, he thinks, mean a collapse of their sense of justice. Better wild retribution than indifference, or a sentimental tendency to forgiveness. It is his indignation with what he saw as the dilution of the sense of justice—to him a kind of intuitive sense of absolute moral pitch—in the public life of France in his day, that drove him from one extreme remedy to another and caused him to reject anything that he suspected of inclining towards compromise with stupidity or wickedness. It is the absence of the sense of absolute moral values, and of the decisive part played in human life by the moral will, that, for Sorel, is Marx's greatest single weakness; he is too historicist, too determinist, too relativist. Sorel's uncompromising voluntarism is at the heart of his entire outlook.

The carrier of true moral values today is the proletariat. Only workers have true respect for work, for family, for sacrifice, for love. They are "frugal, dignified, honest". For him, as for Fernand Pelloutier, the true founder of French Syndicalism, they are beings touched by grace. They were for him what peasants were for Herzen, what "the Folk" was for Herder and the populists, what "the Nation" was for Barrès. It is this traditionalism, which he shared with a certain type of conservative, and the quality of his domestic life with the simple and religious Marie David, that may have deepened his sense of the gulf between the moral dignity of the workers and the character and values of the pliable and the clever who rose to success in democracies.

The rejection of historicism

Sorel's relationship to Marx is harder to define: classes and the class war as the central factor in social change; universal, timeless ideals as disguises for temporary class interests; man as a self-transforming, creative, tool-inventing being; the proletariat—the producers—as the bearer of the highest human values—these ideas he never abandoned. But he rejected the entire Hegelian-Marxist teleology which fuses facts and values. Sorel believed in absolute moral values: the historicism of the Hegelian-Marxist tradition was never acceptable to him, still less the view that issues of basic moral or political principle can be solved by social scientists, psychologists, sociologists, anthropologists; or that techniques based on imitation of the methods of natural science can explain and explain away ideas or values, to the permanence and power of which all history and art, all religion and morality, testify; or, indeed, explain human conduct in mechanistic or biological terms, as the positivists, the blinkered adherents of *la petite science*, believe.

Sorel regards values, both moral and aesthetic, alter though their forms and applications may, as being independent of the march of events. Hence he regards sociological analysis of works of art, whether by Diderot or Marxist critics, as evidence of their lack of aesthetic sense, blindness to the mystery of art and to the part it plays in the life of mankind. Yet he shows little consistency, when engaged on exposing the motives of the enemy; then he is more than ready to use all the tools of psychological or sociological analysis, provided by those who probe for true springs of action by "unmasking" interests disguised as unalterable laws or disinterested ideals.

Thus he fully accepts the Marxist view that economic laws are not laws of nature, but human arrangements, created, whether consciously or not, in the interests of a given class. To look upon them as objective necessities, as bourgeois economists do, is to reify them, an illusion that plays into the hands of that class to whose advantage it is to represent them as being eternal and unchangeable. But then he draws the un-Marxist corollary that effort and struggle can change a great deal; and parts company with the orthodox who insist on a rigorous causal correlation between productive forces and the superstructure of institutions and ideas. The moral absolute must not be touched: it, indeed, does not alter with changes in the forces or relations of production.

History for Sorel is more of a wild flux than Marx supposed: society is a creation, a work of art, not (as, perhaps, the state is) a mere consequence of economic forces. Marx's economism he regards as overstated; this may have been necessary (as Engels, in effect, admitted) in order to counter idealistic or individualist theories of history. But in the end such theories may, he thinks, lead to a belief in the possibility of predicting the social arrangements of the future. This is dangerous and delusive utopianism. Such fantasies may stimulate the workers, but they can arm despotisms too. Even if the workers win their fight against the bourgeoisie, yet, unless they are educated to be creative, they too may generate an oppressive elite of intellectuals from within their own class. He accuses Marx of relying altogether too much on that Hegelian maid-of-all-work, the world spirit, although Marx is credited with understanding that science (and especially economic science) is not "a mill into which you can drop any problem facing you, and which yields solutions". Methods of application are everything. Did not Marx himself once declare, "Whoever composes a programme for the future is a reactionary"? Nor, according to Sorel, did Marx believe in a political party of the working class; for a party, once in the saddle, may well become tyrannical and self-perpetuating, no matter what its manifestos state. Marx, after all, Sorel tells us, believed in the reality of classes alone.

This is a greatly Sorelified Marx: Sorel rejects everything in Marx that seems to him political—his notion of the workers' party, his theory of, and practical measures for, the organization of the revolution, his determinism, above all the doctrine of the dictatorship of the proletariat which Sorel regards as sinister recrudescence of the worst elements of repressive Jacobinism. Even the anarchist classless society with which true human history is to begin is virtually ignored by Sorel: evidently it is too much of a conceptual ideological construction. "Socialism is not a doctrine", he declared, "not a sect, not a political system; it is the emancipation of the working classes who organize themselves, instruct themselves and create new institutions." The proletariat is for him a body of producers at once disciplined and inspired by the nature of the labour they perform. It is this that makes them a class and not a party. The proletarians are not simply the discontented masses; the proletarian revolution is not merely a revolt of poor against rich, of the *popolo minuto* of the Italian communes, organized and led by a self-appointed general staff, the kind of rising advocated by Babeuf or Blanqui; for this can happen anywhere and at any time. The true social revolution of our day must be the revolt of a heroic class of producers and makers against exploiters and their agents and parasites—something that cannot happen unless—this was Marx's crucial discovery—a society has reached a certain stage of technological development. Sorel does not seem to have contemplated a society so mechanized as to generate a technocratic bureaucracy involving both managers and workers in which social dynamism is stifled by the organization required by the sheer size of the industrial system. According to Daniel Halévy, France at the turn of the century, and in particular

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Paris and its environs, were relatively unindustrialized compared with England or Germany. Sorel is closer to Proudhon's world than to that of General Motors or ICI.

Only conflict purifies and strengthens. It creates durable unity and solidarity: whereas political parties, which anyone can enter, of whatever social formation, are ramshackle structures, liable to opportunist coalitions and alliances. This is the vice of democracy. Not only is it the sham denounced by Marxists—a mere front for capitalist control—but the very ideal of democracy—national unity, reconciliation of differences, social harmony, devotion to the common good, Rousseau's General Will above the battle of the factions—all this destroys the conditions in which alone men can grow to their full stature—the struggle, the social conflict. The most fatal of all democratic institutions are parliaments, since they depend on compromise, concessions, conciliation; even if we forget about the "ruses, equivocation, hypocrisy" of which the syndicalists speak, political combinations are the death of all heroism, indeed of morality itself. The member of parliament, no matter how militant his past, is inevitably driven into peaceful association, even cooperation, with the class enemy, in committees, in lobbies, in the chamber itself. The representative of the working classes, Sorel observed, becomes "an excellent bourgeois very early". The hideous examples are before our eyes—Millerand, Briand, Viviani, the spellbinding demagogue Jean Jaurès, with his easily acquired popularity. Sorel had once hoped much from these men, but was disillusioned. They all turned out to be squalid earth-worms, grafters and intriguers like the rest.

Sorel goes even farther. Creative vitality cannot exist where everything gives, where it is too soft to resist. Unless the enemy—not the parasitic intellectuals and theorists, but the [illegible] of the capitalist forces are themselves energetic and fight back like men, the workers will not find enemies worthy of their steel, and will themselves tend to degenerate. Only against a strong and vigorous opponent can truly heroic qualities be developed. Hence Sorel's characteristic wish that the bourgeoisie might develop stronger sinews. No serious Marxist could begin to accept this thesis, not even the mildest reformist, not even those who, like Bernstein, denied the validity of the Marxist historical libretto and declared in language worthy of Sorel himself: "The goal is nothing: the movement is everything." Sorel averts his gaze from the aftermath of the ultimate victory of the working class. He is concerned only with rises and falls, creative societies and classes and decadent ones. No perfection, no final victory is possible in social existence; only in art, in pure creation, can this be achieved. Rembrandt, Ruysdael, Vermeer, Berlioz, Wagner, Liszt, Debussy, Delacroix, the Impressionist painters of his own day—these were capable of reaching an unsurpassable summit in their art. Hence his attack on those who sell their genius for fame or money. Meyerbeer can be despised but not blamed: he was a true child of his age and milieu; his gift was as vulgar as the audience which he knew how to please; not so Massenet, who prostituted his purer talent for fame or popularity, just for a ribbon to wear in his coat. Something of this kind is true of Anatole France, too.

But the total fulfilment that is possible in art, in science, in the case of individual men of genius, cannot occur in the life of society. Hence Sorel's distrust of the entire Marxist scenario: the expropriation of the expropriators, the dictatorship of the proletariat, the reign of plenty, the withering away of the state. He ignores practical problems; he is not interested in the way in which production, distribution, exchange, will be regulated in the new order, nor whether there is any possibility of abolishing scarcity without performing at least some tasks that can hardly be described as creative. Marxists can scarcely be blamed if they did not regard as their own a man who wished to preserve the enemy in being lest the swords of his own side rusted in their scabbards, who had nothing to say about the ideal of a free society of associated producers combining to fight inanimate nature, but, on the contrary, declared, "Everything may be saved if the proletariat, by its use of violence . . . restores to the middle classes something of its former energy", a man who did not seem to care about the problems of poverty and misery as such, and protested against sabotage of factories, because this was wilful destruction of the fruits of someone's creative labour. No man could claim to be a Marxist if he condemned revolutionary terror as a political act and damned Jacobins as tyrants and fanatics—men on whom Marx, to some degree, and even more Lenin, looked as their legitimate ancestors. Sorel denounces socialist activity that springs from envy or malice against the possessing classes, motives infected by bourgeois disease: "The fierce envy of the impoverished intellectual", he declares, "who would like to see the rich merchant guillotined, is a vicious feeling that is not in the least socialist." He cares only for the preservation of heroic vitality and courage and strength which may decline if total victory leaves the victor no enemy.

A man without influence

Sorel was well aware of the oddity of his position, and took perverse and somewhat malicious pleasure in exposing the weaknesses or confusions of his allies. He pronounced socialism to be dead in the early years of our century. He made no effort to influence any active social or political group. He remained true to his professions: isolated, independent, a man on his own. If he has any parallel within the socialist movement, it is with the equally independent and unpredictable Viennese critic and journalist Karl Kraus—also concerned with morality, and the preservation of style in life and literature[2]. Even Bernard Shaw who admired vitality, style, Napoleonic qualities, the "life force" had a greater affinity with him than learned theorists like Kautsky, Plekhanov, Guesde, Max Adler, Sidney Webb, Eduard Bernstein, and the other pillars of European socialism. To him they were everything that he despised most deeply—arid, cerebral, latter-day sophists, clerks and glossators who turned every vital impulse into abstract formulae, utopian blueprints, learned dust. He poured the vials of his scorn upon them. They repaid him by ignoring him completely.

Jaurès called Sorel the metaphysician of Syndicalism. And, indeed, Sorel believed that in every human soul there lay hidden a metaphysical ember glowing beneath the cinders. If one could blow this into a flame, it would kindle a conflagration that would destroy mediocrity, routine, cowardice, opportunism, corrupt bargains with the class enemy. Society can be saved only by the liberation of the producers, that is the workers, particularly those who work with their hands. The founders of Syndicalism were right: the workers must be protected against domination by experts and ideologists and professors—by the intellectual elite of Plato's hideous dream—by what Bakunin (with Marx in mind) had called "pedantocracy". "Can you conceive", asked Sorel, "of anything more horrible than government by professors?" In these days such men tend to be, as often as not, *déraciné* intellectuals, or Jews without a country—men who have no home, no hearth of their own, "no ancestral tombs and relics to defend against the barbarians".

This is, of course, the violent rhetoric of the extreme right—of De Maistre, of Carlyle, of German nationalists, of French anti-Dreyfusards, of antisemitic chauvinists—of Maurras and Barrès, Drumont and Déroulède. But it is also, at times, the language of Fourier and Cobbett, Proudhon and Bakunin, and would later be spoken by Fascists and National Socialists and their literary allies in many countries, as well as those who thunder against critical intellectuals and rootless cosmopolitans in the Soviet Union and other countries of Eastern Europe. No one was closer to this style of thought and expression than the so called left-wing Nazis—Gregor Strasser and his followers in the early days of Hitler, and in France men like Déat and Drieu la Rochelle.

There is an anti-intellectual and anti-Enlightenment stream in the European radical tradition, at times allied with populism, or nationalism, or neo-medievalism, that goes back to Rousseau and Herder and Fichte, and enters agrarian, anarchist, antisemitic and other anti-liberal movements, creating anomalous combinations, sometimes in open opposition to, sometimes in an uneasy alliance with, the various currents of socialist and revolutionary thought. Sorel, whose hatred of democracy, the bourgeois republic and the rational outlook and liberal values of the intelligentsia was obsessive, fed this stream, indirectly at first, but towards the end of the first decade of our century, more violently and openly until, by 1910, this caused a breach between him and his left-wing allies.

Doubtless his devout upbringing, his deep roots in traditional, old-fashioned, French provincial life, his unspoken but profoundly felt patriotism played their part: what seemed to him the demoralization and disintegration of traditional French society plainly preoccupied him throughout his life, and intensified his basic xenophobia and hostility to those who seemed to him beyond the confines of the traditional culture of the West. His anti-intellectualism and antisemitism spring from the same roots as those of Proudhon and Barrès. But there was also the decisive influence of the philosophy of Henri Bergson. With his friend Péguy, Sorel attended Bergson's lectures, and like Péguy was deeply and permanently affected.

It was from Bergson that he derived the notion, which he could equally well have found in the francophobe German Romantics a century earlier, that reason was a feeble instrument compared with the power of the irrational and the unconscious in the life both of individuals and societies. He was profoundly impressed by Bergson's doctrine of the unanalysable *élan vital*, the inner force that cannot be rationally grasped or articulated, which thrusts its way into the empty and unknowable future, and moulds both biological growth and human activity. Not theoretical knowledge but action, and only action, gives understanding of reality. Action is not a means to pre-conceived ends, it is its own policy-maker and pathfinder. Prediction, even if it were possible, would kill it. We have an inner sense of what we are at, very different from, and incompatible with, the outside view, calm contemplation that classifies, dissects, establishes clear structures. The intellect freezes and distorts. One cannot render movement by rest, nor time by space, nor the creative process by mechanical models, nor something living by something still and dead—this is an old Romantic doctrine that Bergson revivified and developed. Reality must be grasped intuitively, by means of images, as artists conceive it, not with concepts or arguments or Cartesian reasoning. This plainly entered Sorel's celebrated doctrine of the social myth which alone gives life to social movements.

There is another source, too, whence the theory of myths may have sprung—the teachings of the founder of modern sociology, Émile Durkheim, who stood at the opposite extreme from Bergson. Rational and sternly positivist, he believed, like Comte, that science alone could answer our questions; what science could not do, no other method could achieve; he was implacably opposed to Bergson's deep irrationalism. Durkheim, who became the leading ideologist of the Third Republic, taught that no society could remain stable without a high degree of social solidarity between its members; this in its turn depended on the prevalence in it of dominant social myths bound up with appropriate ritual and ceremonial; religion had in the past been by far the most powerful of those forms of social cement. Myths are not for Durkheim false beliefs about reality. They are not beliefs about anything, but beliefs *in* something—in descent from a common ancestor, in transforming events in a common past, in common traditions, in shared symbols enshrined in a common language, above all, in symbols sanctified by religion and history. The function of myths is to bind a society, create a structure governed by rules and habits, without which the individual may suffer from a sense of isolation and solitude, may experience anxiety, feel lost, which in its turn leads to lawlessness and social chaos. For Durkheim myths are ultimately a utilitarian response to a quasi-biological need; he treats their role as an empirical discovery of a Burkean kind, as the necessary condition for social stability. Sorel abhorred utilitarianism, and in particular the quest for social peace by cautious republican academics, as an attempt to muffle the class war in the interests of the bourgeois republic.

The power of a myth

For Sorel, myths are something very different. Their function is not to stabilize, but to direct energies and inspire action. They do this by embodying a dynamic vision of the movement of life, the more potent because not rational, and therefore not subject to criticism and refutation by university wiseacres. A myth is compounded of images that are "warmly coloured", and affect men not as reason does, nor education of the will, nor the command of a superior, but as ferment of the soul which creates enthusiasm and incites to action, and, if need be, turbulence. Myths need have no historical reality; they direct our emotions, mobilize our will, give purpose to all that we are and do and make. They are, above all, not utopias. Utopias, from Plato onward, are descriptions of impossible states of affairs, fantasies in the heads of intellectuals remote from reality, evasion of concrete problems, escape into theory and abstraction. Sorel's myths are ways of transforming relationships between real facts by providing men with a new vision of the world and themselves; as when those who are converted to a new faith see the world and its furniture with new eyes. A utopia is "the product of the intellectual labour of theorists who, after observing and discussing the facts, seek to build a model against which to measure existing societies . . . they are constructions which can be taken to pieces . . .", their parts can be detached and fitted into other structures—bourgeois political economy is just such an artificial entity. But myths are wholes perceived instantaneously by the imagination. They are, in effect, political aspirations presented in the form of images "made warm" by strong feeling. They reveal, as mere words cannot, hitherto invisible potentialities in the past and present, and so drive men to concerted efforts to bring about their realization. The effort itself breeds new vitality, new effort and militancy in an endless dynamic process, spiralling upwards, which he called "giving an aspect of reality to hopes of immediate action".

The apocalyptic Christian vision of the Second Coming that is at hand is a myth of this kind—in its light men accepted martyrdom. The Calvinist belief in the renovation of Christianity was a vision of a new order that was not of this world, but in its light the believers successfully resisted the advance of secular humanism. The idea of the French Revolution, referred to with fervour at civic gatherings in French provincial towns, lives on as a vague but ardent image that commands loyalty and stimulates action of a particular kind, but cannot, any more than a hymn, or a flag, be translated into a specific programme, a set of clear objectives. "When masses of men become aroused, then an image is formed which constitutes a social myth." This is how the Italian Risorgimento presented itself to the followers of Mazzini. It is by means of myths that socialism can be converted into a kind of social poetry, can be expressed in action but not in prose, not in treatises intended merely to be understood. The French re[illegible]tionary armies in 1792 were ins[illegible] by a myth and won; the ro[illegible] forces lacked it, and were defe[illegible] The Greeks lived and flourished [illegible] world filled with myths, until [illegible] were subverted by the Sophists [illegible] after them by rootless Oriental [illegible]mopolitans who flooded into Gr[illegible] The analogy with the present [illegible] too patent.

Sorel's myth is not a Marxist [illegible] It has a greater affinity to the [illegible]ernist psychologism of Loisy, Tyrrell, to William James's doc[illegible] of the will, Vaihinger's "philo[illegible] of 'as if'", than with Marx's co[illegible]tion of the unity of theory and p[illegible]tice. The notion of "the people", "folk"—good, simple and true [illegible] unawakened—as it is conceived [illegible] populists, both radical and reac[illegible]ary, of the eternal "real nation" opposed to its corrupt or craven [illegible]resentatives in the thought of na[illegible]alists—Barrès's "la terre et [illegible] morts"—these are Sorel's, not D[illegible]heim's myths. Unsympathetic [illegible] might say the same of the Ma[illegible] conception of the true, dialecti[illegible] grasped interests of the proleta[illegible] as opposed to its actual "empiri[illegible]" wishes, perhaps even of the clas[illegible] society itself, provided that its [illegible]lines remain blurred. The functio[illegible] a myth is to create "an epic sta[illegible] mind". Sorel's insistence on its i[illegible]tionality is, perhaps, what ca[illegible] Lenin to dismiss him so curtly [illegible] contemptuously.

What is to be the myth of [illegible] workers? What is to raise them [illegible] the state of heroic grandeur, ab[illegible] the grey routine of their humdr[illegible] lives? Something which, So[illegible] believes, already inspires those a[illegible]vists in the French *syndicats* who found their leader in the admi[illegible] Fernand Pelloutier who has rig[illegible] kept them from contamination [illegible] democratic politics—the myth [illegible] the general strike. The syndica[illegible] general strike must not be confu[illegible] with the ordinary industrial or "po[illegible]tical" strike which is a mere eff[illegible] to extort better conditions or hig[illegible] wages from the masters, and pre[illegible]poses acquiescence in a soc[illegible] and economic structure common [illegible] owner and wage slave. This is m[illegible] haggling and is the very opposite [illegible] the true class war. The myth of [illegible] syndicalist general strike is a call [illegible] the total overthrow of the enti[illegible] abominable world of calculation [illegible] profit and loss, the treatment of [illegible] human beings and their powers [illegible] commodities, as material for burea[illegible]cratic manipulation, the world of the [illegible]sory consensus and social harmo[illegible] of economic or sociological exper[illegible] no matter what master they serv[illegible] who treat men as subjects [illegible] statistical calculations, malleab[illegible] "human material", forgetting th[illegible] behind such statistics there are liv[illegible] human beings, not so much with no[illegible]mal human needs—to Sorel that do[illegible] not appear to matter much—but [illegible] moral agents able collectively to re[illegible] and create and mould the world [illegible] their will.

The enemy for Sorel is not alwa[illegible] the same: during the Dreyfus Aff[illegible] it was the nationalist demagog[illegible] with their paranoiac, Jacobin c[illegible] of treason, their fanatical search [illegible] scapegoats and wicked incitement [illegible] the mob against the Jews[3], who p[illegible] this role. After their defeat, it is [illegible] "counter-church" of the in[illegible]lectuals, the intolerant, dehuman[illegible]ing, republican "politico-scholastic" party, led by academic despots, b[illegible] in the Ecole Normale, who incre[illegible]ingly become the principal targ[illegible] of his fury. The general strike [illegible] the climax of mounting militancy an[illegible] "violence", when, in an act of co[illegible]centrated collective will, the worke[illegible] in one concerted move, leave th[illegible] factories and workshops, secede [illegible] the Aventine, and then arise as o[illegible] man and inflict a total, crushing, p[illegible]manent, "Napoleonic" defeat up[illegible] the accursed system that shuffl[illegible] them into Durkheim's or Comte's compartments and hierarchies, and thereby all but robs them of the[illegible] human essence. This is the gre[illegible] human uprising of the children [illegible] light against the children of da[illegible]ness, of fighters for freedom agai[illegible] "merchants", intellectuals, po[illegible]cians"—the miserable crew of [illegible] masters of the capitalist world [illegible] their mercenaries, men promo[illegible] from the ranks, bought off [illegible] absorbed into the hierarch[illegible] careerists and social planners, [illegible] and left-wing power or status [illegible] promoters of societies based [illegible] and competition, or else on [illegible] oppression of remorse[illegible] rational organization.

[illegible] Sorel believe, did he expect [illegible] to believe, that this final [illegible] liberation would, or could in[illegible] occur as a historical event? It [illegible] to tell. He had nothing [illegible] to say of the general [illegible] admittedly designed to secure [illegible] concessions, that broke out [illegible] his most syndicalist phase—[illegible] in 1904, above all in the [illegible] Russian Revolution of 1905. [illegible] Péguy's *mystique* reduced [illegible] *politique*. Moreover, if [illegible] believed, as he appeared to, [illegible] if the enemy weakened so [illegible] the class of producers, would [illegible] victory not lead to the elimina[illegible] of the tension without which [illegible] no effort, no creation? Yet [illegible] a myth it is impossible to [illegible] an energetic proletarian move[illegible]. Empirical arguments against [illegible] possibility or desirability of the [illegible] strike are not relevant. It [illegible] suspects, not intended as a [illegible] of action, still less as a plan [illegible] realized in the real world.

[illegible] function of [illegible]lence

[illegible] weapon of the workers is vio[illegible]. Although it gives its name to [illegible] best-known work, its nature [illegible] made clear. Class con[illegible] is the normal condition of [illegible], and force is continuously [illegible] against the producers, that is, [illegible] workers, by the exploiters. Force [illegible] does not necessarily consist in [illegible] coercion, but in control and [illegible] by means of institutions [illegible], whether by design or not, have [illegible], as Marx and his disciples [illegible] made clear, of promoting the [illegible] of the possessing class. This [illegible] must be resisted. To resist [illegible] force is likely to result, as in [illegible] of the Jacobin revolution, in [illegible] of one yoke by another, [illegible] substitution of new masters for [illegible]. A Blanquist putsch could lead [illegible] coercion by the state—the [illegible]ship of the proletariat, per[illegible] by its own representatives, [illegible] successor to the dictatorship of [illegible]. Dogmatic revolutionaries [illegible] become oppressive tyrants: [illegible] is common to Sorel and [illegible] anarchists. Camus revived it in [illegible] with Sartre. Force, by [illegible], represses; violence, [illegible] against it, liberates. Only [illegible] instilling fear in the capitalists can [illegible] workers break their power, the [illegible] exerted against them.

[illegible], indeed, is the function of [illegible] violence: not aggression, [illegible] resistance. Violence is the strik[illegible] off of chains, the prelude to [illegible]ration. It may be possible to [illegible] a more rational existence, bet[illegible] material conditions, a higher [illegible] of living, security, even [illegible] for the workers, the poor, the [illegible], without violence. But the [illegible] of life, rejuvenation, the [illegible] of creative powers, return [illegible] Homeric simplicity, to the subli[illegible] of the Old Testament, to the [illegible] of the early Christian martyrs, [illegible] Corneille's heroes, of the French [illegible] armies—this cannot [illegible] attained by persuasion, without [illegible] as the weapon of liberty.

[illegible] the use of violence can in [illegible] be distinguished from the [illegible] of force is never made clear. It [illegible] postulated as the only alter[illegible] to peaceful negotiation, [illegible] by presupposing a common [illegible] common to workers and em[illegible] alike, denies the reality of [illegible] war. Marx, too, talked about [illegible] need for revolution to purify the [illegible] from the filth of the old [illegible] and render it fit for the new. [illegible] spoke of the cleansing storm [illegible] revolution. Proudhon and [illegible] spoke in similarly apoca[illegible] terms. Even Kautsky declared [illegible] revolution raises men from de[illegible] to a more exalted view of [illegible]. Sorel is obsessed by the idea [illegible] revolution. For him, faith in re[illegible] violence and hatred of [illegible] entails, in the first place, the [illegible] self-insulation of the workers. [illegible] fervently agrees with the syndi[illegible] organizers of the *bourses de* [illegible] (a kind of combination of labour exchanges, trades councils, and social and educational centres of militant workers) that proletarians who allow themselves any degree of cooperation with the class enemy are lost to their own side. All talk of responsible and humane employers, reasonable and peace-loving workers, nauseates him. Profit-sharing, factory councils that include both masters and men, democracy which recognizes all men as equal, are fatal to the cause. In total war there can be no fraternization.

Does violence mean more than this? Is occupation of factories, the seizing of power, physical clashes with police or other agents of the possessing class, the shedding of blood, intended? Sorel remains unclear. The conduct of the Allemanist workers who marched with Jaurès (then still well thought of) at a certain moment of the Dreyfus Affair is one of his very few allusions to the correct use of proletarian violence. Anything that increases militancy, but does not lead to the formation of power structures among the workers themselves, is approved. The distinction between force and violence appears to depend entirely on the character of its function and motive. Force imposes chains, violence breaks them. Force, open or concealed, enslaves; violence, always open, makes free. These are moral and metaphysical, not empirical, concepts. Sorel is a moralist and his values are rooted in one of the oldest of human traditions. That is why Péguy listened to him, and why his theses do belong not only to their own times but retain their freshness.

Rousseau, Fichte, Proudhon, Flaubert, are Sorel's truest modern ancestors; as well as Marx the destroyer of rationalizations, the preacher of class war and of the proletarian revolution; not Marx the social scientist, the historical determinist, the author of programmes for a political movement, the practical conspirator.

The doctrine of myths and its corollary, the emphasis on the power of the irrational in human thought and action, is a consequence of the modern scientific movement, and the application of scientific categories and methods to the behaviour of men. The relatively simple models of human nature which underlie the central ideas of social and political philosophers until quite far into the nineteenth century were gradually being superseded by an increasingly complicated and unstable picture as new and disturbing hypotheses about the springs of action were advanced by psychologists and anthropologists. The rise of doctrines, according to which men are determined by non-rational factors, some of them refracted in highly misleading ways in men's consciousness, directed attention to actual social and political practice and its true causes and conditions, which only scientific investigation can uncover, and which severely limit the area of free will or even make it vanish altogether. This naturalistic approach had the effect of playing down the role of conscious reasons by which the actors mistakenly supposed themselves, and appeared to others, to be motivated. These may well have been among the most decisive causes of the decline of classical political theory which assumes that men who are, to some degree, free to choose between possibilities, do so for motives intelligible to themselves and others, and are, *pro tanto*, open to conviction by rational argument in reaching their decisions. The penetration of the "disguises" of concealed factors—psychological, economic, anthropological—in individual and social life by examination of their actual role, transformed the simpler model of human nature, with which political theorists from Hobbes to J. S. Mill had operated, and shifted emphasis from political argument to the less or more deterministic descriptive disciplines that began with Tocqueville and Taine and Marx, and were carried on by Weber and Durkheim, Le Bon and Tarde, Pareto and Freud, and their disciples in our time.

Sorel rejected determinism, but his theory of myths belongs to this development. His social psychology is an odd amalgam of Marxism, Bergsonian intuitionism, and Jamesian psychology, in which men, once they realize that they are, whether they know it or not, shaped by the class conflict (which he treats as an historical datum) can, by an effort of the will reinforced by the inspiration of an appropriate myth, freely develop the creative sides of their nature, provided they do not attempt to do so as mere individuals but collectively, as a class. Even this is not entirely true of individual men of genius—especially of artists, who can create in adverse social conditions by the strength of their own indomitable spirit. Of this dark process James and Croce and Renan seemed to him to show a deeper understanding than the blinkered sociological environmentalists. But Sorel is not a consistent thinker. His desperate lifelong search for the class, or a group, which can redeem humanity, or at least France, from mediocrity and decay, is itself rooted in a quasi-Marxist sociology of history as a drama in which the protagonists are classes generated by the growth of productive forces, a doctrine for which he claims objective validity.

A search for new champions

The effect of Sorel's doctrine upon the revolutionary syndicalist movement was minimal. He wrote articles in journals, collaborated with Lagardelle, Delesalle and Péguy, offered homage to Fernand Pelloutier, and talked and lectured to groups of admirers in Paris. But when Griffuelhes, the strongest personality since Pelloutier among the syndicalists, was asked whether he read Sorel, he replied, "I read Alexandre Dumas". Sorel was himself what he most despised in others—too intellectual, too sophisticated, too remote from the reality of the workers' lives. He looked for biblical or Homeric heroes capable of the epic spirit and was constantly disappointed. During the Dreyfus case, he denounced the anti-Dreyfusards who seemed to him to stand for lies, injustice, and unscrupulous demagoguery. But after the Dreyfusards had won, he was in turn disgusted by the ignoble political manoeuvring, cynicism and dissimulation of the friends of the people. Jaurès's humanity and eloquence seemed to him mere self-interested demagoguery, democratic clap-trap, dust in the workers' eyes, no better than Zola's rodomontades, or the silver periods of Anatole France, or betrayals by men in whom he had once put his trust—Millerand, Viviani, and worst of all Aristide Briand, the fervent champion of the general strike.

He continued to live quietly in Boulogne-sur-Seine. For ten years, until 1912, he took the tram to attend Bergson's lectures, and on Thursdays came to the gatherings in the offices of Péguy's *Cahiers de la Quinzaine* which he dominated. There he delivered those vast monologues, about politics and economics, classical and Christian culture, art and literature which dazzled his disciples. He drew on a vast store of unsystematic reading; but what lingered in his listeners' memories were his mordant paradoxes. Péguy listened reverently to *le père Sorel*, but in the end when Sorel, disillusioned with the syndicalists who had gone the way of all workers into the morass of social democracy, began to look for new paladins against political impurity, and denounced the radical intellectuals too violently, even he became uncomfortable. When Sorel's antisemitism became more open and more virulent, and he did an unfriendly turn to Julien Benda (a ferocious critic of Bergson and of every form of nationalism, whom Péguy nevertheless greatly admired), and finally entered into an alliance with the militant royalists and chauvinists led by Maurras and the mystical Catholic nationalists grouped round Barrès, who seemed to him independent, militant, and not tainted by the republican blight, this proved too much for Péguy, and he requested Sorel not to return. Sorel was deeply wounded. He preferred talk to writing. The audience of gifted writers and intellectuals was necessary to him. He began to frequent the bookshop of a humbler follower, and went on talking as before.

The flirtation with the reactionaries in the so-called Cercle Proudhon did not last long. In 1912 Sorel acclaimed Mussolini, then a flamboyant socialist militant, as a *condottiere* who, one day, "will salute the Italian flag with his sword". By 1914 he was once again on his own. When war broke out he felt abandoned: Bergson, Péguy, Maurras, even Hervé, all rallied to the defence of the Republic. During the war he was depressed and silent. He corresponded with Croce, who seemed to him critical and detached, and told his friend Daniel Halévy that the war was nothing but a fight between Anglo-American finance and the German general staff. He did not seem to care greatly which gang would win.

After the war, in his letters to Croce, he criticized the beginnings of Fascism and, perhaps under the influence of Pareto, and Croce's initial pro-Fascist moment, pronounced Mussolini a "political genius". Lenin excited him far more. He saw him as a bold and realistic rejuvenator of socialism, the greatest socialist thinker since Marx, who had roused the Russian masses to an epic plane of revolutionary feeling. Lenin was Peter the Great or Robespierre, Trotsky was St Just; their concept of the Soviets seemed to him pure syndicalism: he took it at its face value, as he did, perhaps, Mussolini's denunciation in 1920 of "all states, past, present, and future". He applauded the Bolsheviks' contempt for democracy, and, still more, their ferocious attitude to the intellectuals. He declared that the mounting terror of the Bolshevik party was less harmful than the force which it was designed to repress; in any case it was probably the fault of its Jewish members. He averted his eyes from the strengthening of the party apparatus, and would not speak of Russia as a socialist state, since this concept seemed to him, as it had seemed to Marx, a blatant contradiction in terms.

To use the state as a weapon against the bourgeoisie was, he declared, like "Gribouille who threw himself into the water to avoid getting wet in the rain". He still thought well of Mussolini, but he thought better of Lenin to whom he wrote a passionate paean. By this time few listened to him; he was living in solitude and poverty—he had invested too much of his property in Tsarist and Austrian bonds. His death a few weeks before Mussolini's march on Rome, passed unnoticed. His last uttered word is said to have been "Napoleon . . .".

Of the two heroes of his declining years, Lenin ignored him; Mussolini, in search of respectable intellectual ancestry, claimed him as a spiritual father. Fascist propaganda found useful ammunition in Sorel's writings: the mockery of liberal democracy, the violent anti-intellectualism, the appeal to the power of irrational forces, the calls to activism, violence, conflict as such, all this fed Fascist streams[4]. Sorel was no more a Fascist than Proudhon, but his glorification of action, honour, defiance, his deep hatred of democracy and equality, his contempt for all liberals as Jews, are, like Proudhon's brand of socialism, not unrelated to the language and thought of Fascism and National Socialism; nor did his closest followers fail to note this fact. The ideological link of his views with what is common to romantic Bolshevism and left-wing strains in Fascism is very plain. "The cry 'death to the intellectuals'", he wrote hopefully in his last published collection of articles, "so often attributed to the Bolsheviks, may yet become the battle-cry of the entire world proletariat."

At this point, one might be tempted to bid Sorel goodbye as an eccentric visionary, a penetrating, and cruel critic of the vices of parliamentary democracy and bourgeois humanitarianism—of what Trotsky once called "Kantian-Quaker-liberal-vegetarian nonsense", a writer chiefly read in Italy, both in leftist and nationalist circles, duly superseded by Pareto, Mosca and Michels, a friend of Croce, a minor influence on Mussolini, a half-forgotten extremist safely buried in the pages of the more capacious histories of socialist doctrines. Yet his ghost, half a century later, is by no means laid.

Sorel's message learnt?

Sorel, like Nietzsche, preached the need for a new civilization of makers and doers, what is now called a counter-culture or an alternative society. The progressive left in the nineteenth century believed in science and rational control of nature and of social and individual life, and on this based their attacks upon tradition, prejudice, aestheticism, clericalism, conservative or nationalist mystiques, whatever could not be defended by rational argument—these men have, to some extent, won. The technocratic, post-industrial society in which we are said to be living is governed by men who make use of skilled, scientific experts, rational planners, technocrats. The theory of convergence informs us that societies on both sides of the Iron Curtain are conditioned by similar forces in all essential respects, whatever the differences in kind or degree of individual liberty enjoyed by their members.

This is the kind of order—democracy both real and sham—based on respect for blueprints and specialists, that Sorel most deeply feared and detested. A society of consumers without authentic moral values of their own, sunk in vulgarity and boredom in the midst of mounting affluence, blind to sublimity and moral grandeur, bureaucratic organization of human lives—in the light of what he called *la petite science*, positivist application of quasi-scientific rules to society—all this he despised and hated. Who would revolt against it? The workers had not fulfilled his expectations. They failed to respond to his trumpet calls; they continued to be preoccupied with their material needs; their mode of life remained hopelessly similar to that of the petite-bourgeoisie, one day to be the main recruiting-ground of Fascism, a class which Sorel regarded as the greatest source of moral contamination. He died a disappointed man.

Yet, if he were alive today, the wave of radical unrest could scarcely have failed to excite him. Like Fanon and the Black Panthers, he believed that the insulted and the oppressed can find themselves and acquire self-identity and human dignity by acts of revolutionary violence. To intimidate the cowardly bourgeoisie (or, in Fanon's case, imperialist masters) by audacious acts of defiance, though Sorel did not favour terrorism or sabotage, is in tune with his feeling and his rhetoric. Che Guevara's or Fanon's concern about poverty, suffering and inequality was not at the centre of Sorel's moral vision; but they would have fulfilled his ideal of revolutionary pride, of a will moved by absolute moral values.

The idea of repressive tolerance, the belief that toleration of an order that inhibits "epic" states of mind is itself a form of repression, echoes his own doctrine exactly. The neo-Marxist dialectic according to which all institutions and even doctrines are frozen forms of, and therefore obstacles to, the ever-flowing, ever-creative, human *praxis*, a kind of permanent revolution, might have seemed to him, even if he had understood the dark words of Hegelian Marxism, mere incitement to anarchy. The metaphysics of the School of Frankfurt, and of Lukács, would surely have been roundly condemned by him as the latest utopian and teleological nostrums of academic pedants or charlatans.

He believed in self-restraint and self-discipline. He hated disorder, bohemianism, the lack of self-imposed barriers, as symptoms of self-indulgence and decadence. But the revolt of those whom a German writer has recently described as the Anabaptists of affluence, the preachers of an alternative society uncontaminated by the vices of the past, might well have made an appeal to him. He would have been disturbed by their sexual permissiveness; chastity was for him the highest of virtues; their slovenly habits, their exhibitionism, their addiction to drugs, their formless lives would have enraged him; and

he would have denounced their neo-primitivism, the Rousseauian belief that poverty and roughness are closer to nature than austerity and civilized habits, and therefore more authentic and morally pure. He regarded this as false and stupid, and attacked it all his life. But the present state of Western society would have seemed to him a confirmation of Vico's prophecy of social disintegration as a prelude to a second barbarism, followed by a new, more virile civilization, a new beginning in which men would again be simple, pious and severe. Barbarism did not frighten him.

He might have found reasons for acclaiming the Chinese Cultural Revolution. "If socialism comes to grief", he once observed, "it will evidently be in the same way as Protestantism, because it will be alarmed at its own barbarity", with the implication that it must not stop but plunge on—barbarism is, after all, an antidote to decay. This is instinctively believed by all those today who have opted out of a wicked society, as Sorel, who admired the early Christians for their renunciation, so ardently wished the workers to do.

But the strongest single link with the revolutionary movements of our day is his unyielding emphasis on the will. He believed in absolute moral ends that are independent of any dialectical or other historical pattern, and in the possibility, in conditions which men can themselves create, of realizing these ends by the concerted power of the free and deliberate collective will. This, rather than a sense of the unalterable timetable of historical determinism, is the mood of the majority of the rebels, political and cultural, of the past two decades. Those who join revolutionary organizations, and those who abandon them, are more often moved by moral indignation with the hypocrisy or inhumanity of the regime under which they live (or alternatively with similar vices in the revolutionary party which, disillusioned, they leave), than by a metaphysical theory of history—of social change—by which they do not wish to be left behind. The reaction is moral more than intellectual, of will rather than reason; such men are against the prevailing system because it is unjust or bestial rather than irrational or obsolescent. More than seventy years ago Eduard Bernstein had complained that Marxism failed to provide an acceptable view of the ends of life, and preached the universal values of the neo-Kantians. So did Karl Liebknecht, who could not be accused of lack of revolutionary passion. This is far closer to Sorel's position, and connects him with modern revolutionary protest.

Yet, of course, this anti-rationalism was, to some degree, self-refuting. He knew that if faith in reason is delusive, it is only by the use of rational methods, by knowledge and self-knowledge and rational interpretation of the facts of history or psychology or social behaviour, that this could be discovered and established. He did not wish to stop invention and technology; he was no Luddite, he knew that to break machines is to perpetuate ignorance, scarcity and poverty. He might have admitted that the remedies offered by the modern insurgents are delusions; but this would not have troubled him. He proposed no specific economic or social policies. Like Hegel's opponents in post-Napoleonic Germany he appealed to love, solidarity, community; this, in due course, offered sustenance to "extra-parliamentary" oppositions both of the right and of the left. If Fanon, or the Black militants, or the revolutionary students were not healers, he might have recognized them as the disease itself. This is what Herzen said about himself and the Nihilists of his own generation. His lifelong effort to identify and distinguish the pure from the impure, the physicians from the patients, the heroic few who should be the saviours of society—workers, or radical nationalists, or Fascists, or Bolsheviks—ended in failure. Would he have tried to find them in colonial peoples, or Black Americans or students mysteriously uncontaminated by the false values of their society? We cannot tell. At any rate, the dangers of which he spoke were, and are, real. Recent events have shown that his diagnosis of the malaise is anything but obsolete.

He was almost everything that he so vehemently denounced, an alienated intellectual, a solitary thinker isolated from men of action who achieved no relationship with the workers and never became a member of any vigorous, cooperative group of producers. He, whose symbol of creation was the cut stone, the chiselled marble, was productive only of words. He believed implicitly in family life and for twenty-five years had none. The apostle of action felt at home only in bookshops, among purveyors of words, talkers cut off, as he had always been, from the life of workers and artists; he remained eccentric, egocentric, an outsider of outsiders. It is an irony that, one may be sure, could scarcely have escaped him.

No monument to him exists. Ten years after his death, so Daniel Halévy tells us, Rolland Marcel, the director of the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, came to him with an odd story. He had recently met the ambassador of Fascist Italy who informed him that his government had learnt that Sorel's grave was in state of disrepair, and that his government was prepared to put up a monument to the eminent thinker. Soon after this, the ambassador of the USSR approached him with an identical proposal on behalf of the Soviet government. Halévy said that he would get in touch with Sorel's family. After a long delay he received a communication which said the family regarded the grave as its own private affair and that of no one else. Halévy was delighted. The message was dry, brusque and final. It might have been sent by Sorel himself.

The prophet of concerted collective action, of pragmatic approaches, prized only absolute values, total independence. He was to be the modern Diogenes bent on exploding the most sacred dogmas and respected beliefs of all the establishments of his enlightened age. Sorel is still worth reading. The world about and against which he was writing might be our own. Whether he is, as he wished to be, "serious, formidable, sublime", or, as often as not, perverse, dogmatic and obsessed, with all the moral fury of perpetual youth (and this fiery, not wholly adult, outraged feeling may in part account for his affinity with young revolutionaries of our time), his [...] come at us from every quarter, [...] mark a revolt against the ratio[...] ideal of frictionless contentme[...] a harmonious social system in w[...] all ultimate questions are redu[...] technical problems, soluble [...] appropriate techniques. It i[...] vision of this closed world [...] morally repels the young today. [...] first to formulate this in [...] language was Sorel. His words [...] have power to upset.

NOTES

1. This letter, by Marx, which [...] fessor L. J. Brentano repor[...] having been sent to Marx's f[...] friend, Professor Beesly, has [...] so far as I know, been found [...] does the sentiment sound [...] Marxian, although Eduard Ber[...] is reported to have said that it [...] to him to be so.

2. Marxism is in danger of bec[...] "a mythology founded on the [...] dies of language", he wrote [...] letter to Croce. This could wel[...] been said by Kraus.

3. Destined, Sorel declared in 1[...] become a formidable weapon.

4. A romantic, bitterly anti-[...] cratic Russian reactionary cou[...] clared that when he saw bowler-h[...] bourgeois scurrying along the [...] of Paris, he asked himself whe[...] was for this that Alexander the [...] in his plumed helmet, had [...] down the Persian hosts. Sorel [...] not have repudiated this sentime[...]

—Isaiah Berlin

This is the text on which Sir I[...] Berlin's recent Creighton Lect[...] Sorel was based.

Negotiations with the Russians

LLEWELLYN WOODWARD:
British Foreign Policy in the Second World War
Volume II
819pp. HMSO. £4.10.

The second volume of Llewellyn Woodward's magisterial contribution to the history of the Second World War comes out more than ten years after it was completed, and nearly thirty years after the events described in it. At this rate the last of the five volumes may well be overtaken by the researches of less privileged historians, since the long start which Woodward was given by the fifty-year rule, as an official historian, has since been cut by twenty years. But although it is a pity that publication of his work has been so long delayed by considerations of policy, there are several good reasons why it will never be entirely superseded. One is that an abridged version of the complete work was published in 1962, which was a masterpiece in its own right. Another is that it was Woodward's declared intention from the first to describe British foreign policy on the basis of materials available at the time, not to criticize it with the benefit of after-knowledge. Later historians will write perhaps more critical but not more authoritative accounts.

During the interval between the completion of the original work and Woodward's death, there were certainly a number of temptations to amplify the record on the basis of later publications. Generally, but not invariably, these were rightly resisted, on the ground that what was not known in the Foreign Office at the time is not relevant to a work of this kind. Sometimes it may be regretted. Woodward refers, for example, to the difficulty of assessing the outcome of the Tehran Conference in 1943 in the absence of documentary evidence on the Russian side. Although there has never been as complete a disclosure of documents by the Soviet government as in this country and the United States, there has in fact been some highly selective publication in the past decade of Russian records of several allied conferences, including Tehran. These at least show how easy it was for suspicious allies to go away from such conferences with different ideas of what was said, and still more so of what was meant.

Relations with the Soviet Union naturally dominate the present volume, which opens in the middle of 1941 and ends at the end of 1943. The main themes were the importance to the Russians of military supplies from the Western allies, the need for a second front in Europe, the recognition of satisfactory frontiers for the Soviet Union, and especially the settlement of Russo-Polish disputes. It is interesting to observe the order of priority of these matters in Stalin's mind as reflected in the Foreign Office records. Being evidently no less confident than Churchill of ultimate victory, even at a time when both Moscow and Leningrad seemed to be about to fall to the enemy, he was determined from the first to extract postwar concessions from his allies. When Eden went to Moscow in December, 1941, the subject to which Stalin unexpectedly reverted again and again was the Soviet government's right to retain possession of the Baltic states after the war. A long extract from the record of the conversations shows vividly the brutal, repetitive technique by which Stalin insisted on getting his own way, even to the point of refusing to sign a treaty of alliance until this one point was finally settled. Equally revealing is the fact that Eden was quite taken by surprise. It is clear that he was inadequately briefed, for which the blame must rest on that most idiosyncratic of ambassadors, Stafford Cripps.

Cripps was an example of a wartime fashion which seriously affected the conduct of British diplomacy, sometimes for better and sometimes for worse. This was the practice of making political appointments to important ambassadorial posts. In part the reason lay in Churchill's personal distrust of professional diplomatists. There was also the more presentable reason that a different style of diplomacy was needed in dealing directly with powerful personalities like Stalin and Roosevelt, or with military commanders like Eisenhower. Sometimes there was also a tacit desire to remove from the scene a politician whom events had discredited, like Halifax or Hoare, without actual disgrace. (Halifax, it is worth recalling, was considered for the Washington Embassy only after Lloyd George had declined it.) A few of these unorthodox appointments were successful, notably that of Harold Macmillan in Algiers. For the most part, however, they handicapped rather than advanced British diplomacy. The opportunity which this volume offers to compare Cripps's performance in Moscow with Craigie's in Tokyo, for example, is greatly to the advantage of the latter as a professional diplomatist over the former as a left-wing politician supposedly sharing the ideology of his hosts.

Apart from Anglo-Soviet relations, the main themes of the second volume are the entry of Japan into the war and the elimination from it of Italy; the emergence of the "special relationship" with the United States, embodied in the discussions leading up to the Atlantic Charter and the United Nations; and the corresponding emergence of a special confusion in relations with the French. The problems of dealing with the kaleidoscope of French personalities—Pétain, Darlan, de Gaulle, Giraud in particular—were by far the most intractable even in a period which bristled with difficulties; they occupy five chapters out of seventeen, in contrast with only three on the far more important issues of the Far East. (The fault lies with the French, not with the author.) It also needs to be borne in mind that Allied policy in the Mediterranean was bedevilled at the same time with other critical problems besides those of Vichy, North Africa, and the Free French: not only the impending collapse of Italy, but also acute crises in relations with the Resistance in Yugoslavia and Greece. The latter do not appear at all in the present volume, though the abridged version brings out very clearly the juxtaposition and interpenetration of all these disturbing events.

A problem that is common to every volume of such a large-scale work is here apparent. The relevant time-scale is widely different in different theatres of the war. While the main series of events in Volume Two spreads from June, 1941 to December, 1943, some chapters unavoidably begin earlier or continue later: that on the Far East begins in 1939, that on the consequences of [...] Italian surrender ends in June 19[...] It is not easy for the historia[...] clarify the impact of simultan[...] difficulties on harassed policy-mak[...] when they are thus split up in se[...] ate volumes. The problem is ea[...] and was more effectively solved i[...] single-volume abridgement. The [...] eral reader would be well advised [...] have that abridgement ready to h[...] as supporting background a[...] studying the widely-spaced volum[...] of the more detailed work. Neith[...] warning nor commendation will [...] needed by professional historian[...] Llewellyn Woodward's reputat[...] will suffice. Perhaps one [...] may be mentioned which will occ[...] in the mind of every reader: a [...] or revived conviction of the gr[...] ness of Churchill, the one man w[...] never fell below the level of eve[...] In the preface to his abridged edi[...] Woodward paid a deserved tri[...] to Churchill as historian as wel[...] Prime Minister. He would h[...] made short work of posthumous [...] tractors.

Eurocentrism will not do

PAUL STREETEN and HUGH CORBET (Editors):
Commonwealth Policy in a Global Context
232pp. Cass. £3.25.

To the question, What meaning has the Commonwealth in modern conditions?, many people can produce no rational answer. They see the Commonwealth either in terms of a kind of watered-down empire, or as an alternative to something else (usually, at the moment, the Common Market).

The value of this collection of essays is that it examines the reality of the modern Commonwealth under various headings, ranging from Britain, Russian sea-power and Commonwealth connexions, to the effects of closer British links with Europe on trade with the Third World. Inevitably, Britain's relationship with the Commonwealth, and the effects on that relationship of the approach to Europe, form a recurring theme. Writing on the Soviet sea-power question, for example, Lionel Gelber comments that Britain, as the hub of an oceanic system, needs, as land powers do not, a network of overseas connexions, and remarks that these "are incompatible . . . with membership in the Common Market because what the latter demands . . . is economic and political unification".

In general, the message conveyed by these essays is not opposition to closer links with Europe. Rather, it is that the attempt to get into Europe has been allowed to obscure, and put at risk, what should be the complementary benefits of the Commonwealth connexion. In Hugh Corbet's words, in his chapter on commercial realignments and Commonwealth relations, "exclusively Eurocentric policies are not in accord with Britain's world-wide interests and capabilities". Or, as Paul Streeten puts it in his chapter on access to the new Europe for Third World trade, "there should be no need for serious conflict between Britain's position and interests in the Commonwealth and her position and interests [...] Western Europe".

Unfortunately, as Michael Lip[...] shows in the final chapter, on pr[...] pects for Commonwealth coopera[...] and planning, the approach to ne[...] tiation with Europe by the Bri[...] Government has been irrational, [...] that it has involved throwing a[...] unnecessarily, real advantages:

Neglect of Commonwealth trade [...] Britain is sometimes described [...] "realism", but it is not "realis[...] wantonly to abandon useful imp[...] and advantages in major export mark[...] It can appear so only under a defin[...] of realism that covers replacing che[...] goods by dear ones, joining trade n[...] ciations without securing the countr[...] external balance and seeking to win [...] friends by demonstrating special [...] in abandoning old ones.

However readers may dis[...] with the views expressed by [...] writers of these essays, they [...] hardly accuse them of insularity. [...] the very least, they show that emb[...] ing Europe need not—but all [...] often does—imply giving the Co[...] monwealth a kiss of death.

[...]t the parish pump

[...]ACKSON:
[...]ncial Press and the Com[...]
[...] Manchester University Press.

[...] local editors who squirm [...] they hear their Member of [...] extolling the virtues of [...]incial, as against the national, [...] they know this is done because [...]tional newspapers have no [...] defined sector of constituency [...]-realize that they do have [...] over their Fleet Street [...]. They are nearer to their [...]. They can serve their com[...] more directly. In many cases [...] makes reading of the local [...]per obligatory. One would [...] and announcements, to [...] disadvantage, if one did not. [...] height of the India-Pakistan [...] local newspaper's banner [...] across the whole of the front [...] "Infertility of Cows Caus[...] ". Smile at the sense of [...] as one may, the fact is that [...] of news was more impor[...] the paper's readers than any[...] that was happening in the East.

[...] many local newspapers [...] some of the old-fashioned [...] virtues, the mistake is [...] of regarding the provin[...] as a whole as essentially [...]ging. In fact a case can be [...] that it has changed more [...] past fifty years than the [...] press has done. The *Daily* [...] today is not so distant from [...]'s paper as the *Manchester* [...] *News* of 1971 is from the [...] *Evening News* of 1921. [...] is continuing. And the [...] service—even though it be [...] the parish pump—to enter[...] still being higher in the local [...] than it is in the national ones, [...] can be of more practical [...] to the community. News[...] too often considered in [...] their influence on politics [...] the part they play in [...] is often greater.

[...] British obsession with recon[...] too often leads to studies [...]paper change being concerned with ownership. Ian Jackson confesses at the outset of *The Provincial Press and the Community* that

the idea for a specialised study of the evening and weekly regional Press first suggested itself in 1963, at a time when evening newspapers of Birmingham, Leeds, Leicester, Manchester and Nottingham were being closed down or merged in a general rationalisation of the few remaining competitive situations.

In so far as ownership leads to monopoly it is important; otherwise, outside London, the editor of a newspaper has been, and is, of more significance than its owner. (In this connexion it is disturbing to be told that "at least eight of the sixteen newspapers sampled in chapters 5 and 7 have seen a change of editor since 1966".) Mr Jackson wisely puts his focusing glass over a much wider area. Treatment of news, editorial content and influence, political partisanship, regard for culture, reader participation, advertising, display, are all covered.

The greatest change in the provincial press began at the outset of the fifty years already mentioned. It was heralded by the decline of the Liberal morning newspapers outside London in the years immediately after the First World War. What, during the war years, led to its happening no one knows. The artificial economics of wartime publishing lead to almost every newspaper making a profit. Too much advertising bids for too little space. The reader is asked—and in the national interest is willing—to pay more for his paper and to receive only a fraction of what he got before. When restrictions were swept away in 1919 and the fierce wind of competition was let loose, it was the provincial morning newspapers that were found to be the shorn lambs. Many succumbed. With them went a preoccupation with politics. The provincial evening newspapers that prospered made other interests paramount. Today, while, as Mr Jackson says, a partisan paper can in some places do well, most provincial evening newspapers not only occupy a "middle ground" in news, they also adopt a neutral, or near neutral, position in politics, to avoid the risk of alienating readers so that they can secure maximum sales.

The disappearance of committed party newspapers in the provinces is not all loss. With vigorous editors there is more chance of issues being rationally, instead of emotionally, considered. Yet the monopoly position is not a healthy one. It has led to the old radical newspaper becoming almost extinct. Mr Jackson rightly wishes for a return to competition. The wiser editors and managers also know it would be better for themselves in the long run as well as for the community. Advertisers' and readers' habits being what they are—Mr Jackson sets them out succinctly—the economics of modern newspaper production do not allow many "second" newspapers a chance.

Mr Jackson's analysis of the reader's influence on local newspapers—more individually effective than it can be on national newspapers—is encouraging. "The dominant editorial assumption", he concludes, "is that readerships are now moving—albeit very slowly—in the direction of greater seriousness of outlook." Editors claim they are doing what they can to accelerate the movement. If they are to be successful they have to lead all across the board. The strength of most provincial newspapers is that they are family newspapers. Life is not all public affairs. Most editors acknowledge that a full life also includes cultural interests. In spite of this, many provincial newspapers have here lost ground. Tables of column inches devoted to these interests are no guide. The coverage of literature and the other arts was better in content and in the quality of its writing between the wars than it is today. It is a pity Mr Jackson could not have analysed book-reviewing with the same thoroughness he has given to local news and crime stories.

[...]overing colour

[...] and the Press
[...] Runnymede Trust. 50p.

[...] a useful collection of four [...] given to conferences by jour[...] who would think of them[...] and be thought of—as honest [...]-minded men on questions [...] relations. One's first reaction [...] that there should be, [...] of local and national [...] in the British press, men [...] stop and take stock of their [...] in the possible escalation [...] tension. Clement Jones, [...] the *Wolverhampton Express* [...], and Peter Harland of the [...] *Telegraph and Argus*, have [...] resisted more than average [...] to use race issues to [...] circulation; and Harold Evans [...] Hugo Young of the *Sunday* [...] have produced a weekend [...] coverage of the racial scene [...] if it has not been perfect, [...] very well have done far more [...] racism among its Tory [...]. It is good to know that they [...] lesser men are taking the [...] decisions which are dis[...] here.

[...] the fact of the matter is that, [...] pragmatic way, Clement [...] Peter Harland, and even [...] Evans, do not seem to know [...] what their general principles [...] in handling the race issue. [...], it would seem, does Lord [...] who introduces the pamphlet. [...] really good enough simply to [...] editors, as racial liberals do, [...] down race questions or con[...] to represent coloured immi[...] as goodies fighting native [...] Nor is it sufficient simply [...] journalists to confine themselves to the facts. Nothing could be more unrealistic than to expect the newspaper business to employ editors and expect them to act as Sunday School teachers. Nor could there be anything more lethal in Britain's racial situation than a judiciously chosen fact out of context. The problem, as Mr Evans realizes, is for the editor to go beyond mere impartiality and neutrality to that far more difficult to define virtue—objectivity.

Mr Young comes nearest to the heart of the matter after a careful study of the way in which the press handled the business of the East African Asians. He shows that, had the press been equipped and willing, it might well have got some worthwhile facts of its own to set against those which racialists were using to terrify the Home Office. But far more important than this, he shows that there are no such things as mere facts. Each fact has its context, and unless the journalist has the education and background understanding of the problem he is dealing with, he will fill in the connecting lines between facts with the first, if not the most popular, ideology which comes to hand.

Race and the Press should be valuable in starting argument among journalists rather than closing it. Best of all, it might encourage some of them to go beyond the opportunist empiricism in which most of them are trained and really try to learn something about the concepts and theories and comparisons which alone will enable them to attain something approaching objectivity.

Short commons

CECIL H. KING:
Without Fear or Favour
246pp. Sidgwick and Jackson. £2.75.

This handsomely produced book has rather the air of a rich man's document file, a touch more sumptuous than the contents warrant. There are bits from newspapers, magazines and broadcasts, fragments of talks (to a Rotary club here, to a group of schoolboys or Swedish students there) in which Cecil King gives his laconic reflections on men and affairs, with excursions into the spiritual life as well. Is this any more than an impulse, understandable and harmless enough, to rescue a few personal papers from the winds of oblivion? To be any more, the collection would need to be fused by a unifying personality of uncommon interest.

Short of that—and these pieces, though often sensible and even sensitive enough in themselves, are considerably short of that—the impact can hardly avoid a comic aspect. Their brevity may be modestly meant but it has the opposite effect, like ultimate wisdom uttered from a mountain top. Do you want to know what Mr King thinks about President Kennedy, Lord Avon, Harold Wilson, God? Are you interested in his brisk views on sex, death, love, beauty, pain, sin, immortality? At least he avoids the oracular. He is the plain truth-sayer, though it may well be doubted whether the truth on such deep matters could possibly be as plain as Mr King makes it.

E L Doctorow's
The Book of Daniel is a great novel
American reviewers agree. British reviewers will have their say on February 17th, 1972.
Price £2·50
Macmillan

Supertanker tycoons

DORIS LILLY :
Those Fabulous Greeks
Onassis, Niarchos, and Livanos
385pp. W. H. Allen. £2.50.

When Frank Harris boasted that he had dined in every important house in London, Oscar Wilde added "once". Evelyn Waugh is on record that "anyone in the world can meet anyone else once", and now Doris Lilly on the dust-jacket of her latest work, *Those Fabulous Greeks*, tells us that she thinks she knows everyone worth knowing in the world. One can envy her the width of her acquaintance without admiring her discrimination, and though she is the author of a little-known work, *How to make love in five languages*, her range does not include Greek, as she makes clear in her preface: "It is not only that Greek words are difficult but they're in an entirely different alphabet which is baffling."

In the circumstances she is to be complimented on her industry and good fortune in having been able to compile this triple biography without ever having had to refer to anything written in her heroes' native tongue, and having indeed confined her bibliography to English-language sources. Her readers will not therefore expect revelations about gambling and tax-avoidance by which in the main the three great fortunes in question have been amassed; they will have to content themselves with the stale gossip of two continents—a field which Miss Lilly, a former gossip-writer in the New York press, has made peculiarly her own.

Stavros Livanos, who was at one time the father-in-law of both Aristotle Onassis and Stavros Niarchos, died in 1963, the owner of a fleet of seventy modern ships totalling more than a million tons, with sixteen more under construction. He was not interested in personal publicity, and Miss Lilly has not been able to find out anything about him other than his ancestry, his meanness, and his habit of playing bridge for modest stakes. The book is about his one-time sons-in-law, who are hard to separate, so much do their careers resemble each other.

The nations of the modern world seem to have entered into a conspiracy to enrich this pair. By no means conforming to the traditional pattern of rascally Greek shipowners commissioning leaky tubs in order to profit by their insurances when they sank, they have on the contrary launched a series of the most up-to-date vessels, especially tankers. They fly not the Jolly Roger but the flags of Liberia and Panama. Their crews are the best paid in the business; their legal advisers likewise. These floating Gulbenkians have made their fortunes out of the Western world's need to import oil and the Western world's indifference about the means by which this need is supplied.

Each ended the Second World War with a lot of miscellaneous shipping, and added to it, sometimes by devious means, when the United States sought to dispose of its wartime accumulations. They were the first to employ the German yards to re-equip their purchases. When the postwar boom flickered out, the Korean War of 1950 came just in time to send freights soaring. Subsequent closures of the Suez Canal have served to emphasize the need for huge tankers which the Greeks were best equipped to supply. Both have won the confidence of the American banks whose advances—secured on the oil companies' charters—have financed the huge expenditures involved.

In their personal lives, Mr Onassis appears the more extrovert of the two. Monte Carlo, Winston Churchill, Maria Callas, and Jacqueline Kennedy are the names of some of the campaign medals he wears on his chest. Mr Niarchos, more often married, has experienced more of tragedy: of these matters we are spared no detail. Mr Niarchos's yacht Creole is reputed the more elegant, Mr Onassis's Christina the more expensive. Mr Niarchos has an island where he rears pheasants which he shoots in distinguished company: Mr Onassis, more crudely perhaps, invites his friends to witness a whale-killing. Of these two famous spenders, Mr Onassis has the edge, because there seems no parallel in Mr Niarchos's life of the private war with Peru when Mr Onassis's fishing fleet was bombed and eventually ransomed by the underwriters. Both have inspired many acres of newsprint in the social columns of their day; both will prove to have had their names written in water.

Supermarket knight

MAURICE CORINA :
Pile it High Sell it Cheap
The Authorized Biography of Sir John Cohen, Founder of Tesco
204pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson. £2.50.

Sir John Cohen is by no means a member of that distinguished family whose doings have been included in Chaim Bermant's *Cousinhood* and chronicled by Lord Snow in *The Conscience of the Rich*. He is in fact the former costermonger son of poor immigrants who has made a fortune in the food business and was knighted by the previous administration for "services to retailing". This is a career which Hogarth's industrious apprentice would have been happy to emulate but scarcely justifies Mr Corina in saying that Chaim Weizmann "was to be less well known to the British people than the former Air Mechanic Jock Cohen" who had been posted to Palestine at the time that Allenby liberated Jerusalem. Leaving out this unfortunate comparison of like with unlike, Mr Corina, the present industrial editor of *The Times*, has in this authorized biography done justice to the engaging trader, the founder and first President of Tesco.

A wheeler-dealer who made a point of getting good advisers and was willing to listen to them, Cohen has risen to stardom with the consumer revolution. The increase in working-class spending power and the development of suburban life has brought the grist to his mill. His special talent was for the purchase of cheap goods at rubbish prices and for their speedy distribution at minimum mark-up: he was quick to appreciate the potential of the much wider market that was opening to him. A shrewd eye for the property values laid a firm foundation for his ensuing fortune. In this career of seemingly unbroken success, Mr Corina has highlighted his abnegation and subsequent adoption of trading stamps and his tough but eventually successful battle against Resale Price Maintenance. He introduced the supermarket to this country and though this meant the knell of the traditional small shopkeeper he seems to have escaped the obloquy normally associated with such a breakthrough.

Mr Corina has tackled his task with modesty and efficiency some of which may be due to filial piety in that his father was himself, by his employment with a London Co-operative Society, in a sense a pioneer of self-service. If Tesco is now a household name this little book shows how it was done both in the marketplace and in the City too.

Damn softies

TAYLOR CALDWELL :
Growing Up Tough
159pp. Tom Stacey. £2.

It is hard not to react emotionally against emotional reactionaries; but we must make the effort. Taylor Caldwell, author of numerous best-sellers, is here writing "on herself". *Growing Up Tough* is a collection of articles mostly published originally in *American Opinion*. Her style is punchy, readable, and demotic. Her views are very, very extreme, and presumably strike a chord in quite a few American and perhaps British hearts. But she is wielding the backlash as few in Britain would dare.

"I began being a conservative when I was very young." She hated a liberal aunt who cut the buttons off garments destined for the poor. A mean trick indeed. Her youthful distrust of liberals was confirmed when a watery-eyed teacher gratuitously bade the class be tolerant of its Black and Jewish members, thereby creating a self-consciousness that was not there before. Miss Caldwell hates liberals. She mocks their jargon, their preoccupations, and their general wetness and unmanliness. She even hates their social habits. She describes the sort of liberal cocktail party where they served "only sherry and clam-and-sour-cream dip". This was not good enough, and she demanded, but did not get, the hard stuff.

She also hates indiscriminate loving-kindness and the "Child-Lovers". These are the social workers, educators, magistrates, and permissive parents who will not admit that children are little devils who have to be tamed the hard way. She believes that America's teachers have been "well indoctrinated with Communism", and that anarchy and revolution have been "artfully introduced" into the mass media.

Her own parents were not Child-Lovers. They brought her up very tough indeed, by her own account. She insists that her hard and loveless childhood did her no harm, but taught her independence and survival skills, which were tested to the full during her teenage first marriage to an unsuccessful Appalachian farmer. This toughness however has had its repercussions in her personal life. She bewails the fact that the masterful, rugged type of man, the sort she prefers, was not attracted to her. Only the "creeps" (her word) have clung to her, and let her support them. American men as a whole, she feels, have become emasculated and "swamped in soft pink jello". Women's Liberation is a bad idea, for a rather subtle reason: women have been playing the "Big Con Game" for centuries, having it easy, being cherished. If they attain "equality", they will in fact become the slaves to work and responsibility that men have always been. Miss Caldwell regrets that, because of her fatal attraction for "creeps", she has never been able to play the Game.

She is in favour of corporal punishment, hard work, traditional values, traditional sex-roles, discipline, strict Christian morality, and Malcolm Muggeridge. Fine. And she knows how to be funny; some of her shots deserve to reach their target. But the quality of her hatred diminishes the effectiveness of her arguments. It borders on the hysterical, and is frightening. She defines liberty as "the right not to be loved". It seems a pity, but feel free, Miss Caldwell.

The good doctor

GEORGE MARSHALL and DAVID POLING :
Schweitzer
Foreword by Rhena Schweitzer.
342pp. Geoffrey Bles. £3.50.

It is probably too soon to hope for an objective assessment of the character and achievement of Albert Schweitzer, since so much depends on the biographer's attitude to African nationalism, European colonialism, the missionary movement and so on. Yet, after the sometimes ill-informed and even spiteful attacks of the past ten years or so, it was time for a sober and reasoned account of the growth and aims of the Lambaréné hospital as seen approximately from Schweitzer's own point of view.

Schweitzer sets out to give such an account and to place his work in Africa in the context of his life as a whole. It is written with immense good will and, on the part of one of the authors, with the advantage of a personal knowledge of Schweitzer and of recent years at Lambaréné: and it carries the not inconsiderable approval of Schweitzer's daughter. Yet it is a disappointing book. The earlier part relies too much on the retelling of youthful anecdotes one has heard before, while the authors are ill-equipped to deal with Schweitzer's musicianship—seeming to take it for granted that he said the last word on Bach. They are more knowledgeable about his theology but, even here, they tend to see *The Quest of the Historical Jesus* too much in the light of what went before it rather than of what came after. Jean-Paul Sartre, for instance, a second cousin of Schweitzer's, is regarded rather as if he were merely a slightly irresponsible deviator from "Uncle Albert's" basic philosophy.

The middle chapters are derived almost entirely from Schweitzer's own writing about Lambaréné, but, though they undoubtedly re[ceive] some energy from their orig[inal] source, they are continually wei[ghed] down by the authors' deade[ning] style. Over and over again, epi[sodes] which are lively enough in th[em]selves are interrupted by genera[liza]tions which might have come fr[om a] Missionary Society address:

> At thirty, Albert Schweitzer [was] famous. He was a consummate [musi]cian, a leading scholar, one of [the] world's great theologians and phi[loso]phers.

Or:

> Schweitzer was fast becoming an i[nsti]tution at Lambarene, to be loved [and] respected by African and Euro[pean] alike.

As might be expected, this h[...] hand, head-bowed attitude bec[omes] even more embarrassing when [the] authors reach the last years [of] Schweitzer's life. The period [of] world recognition and honou[r in] the life of any famous man [is a] period of trial for his biograp[hers] and in this book the list of trib[utes,] degrees and prizes, of fa[mous] friends and correspondents begi[ns to] read like an obituary notice. [It is] helpful to read of Schweitzer's [pro]tests against the Hydrogen Bo[mb,] but to be told that Miss S[usan] Hampshire visited Lambaréné [is] surely of interest more to [Miss] Hampshire's admirers than [to] Schweitzer's.

Of course, Le Grand Docteu[r's] emergence as a world figure i[s] itself a subject well worth study [and] may, in a way, be detachable fr[om] his biography as a man—for, [like] Livingstone, he became someth[ing] of a living symbol of the W[hite] Man's conscience in Africa. In [this] biography the authors try to port[ray] both the man and the world fi[gure] but succeed only half-heartedly [in] either, so that, for all their "fr[iend]liness" to Schweitzer—it is h[is] word—they have managed to [turn] one of the heroic life-stories of o[ur] time into a rather dull book.

Not so plain

FRANK BAINES :
Officer Boy
207pp. Eyre and Spottiswoode. £2.50.

Frank Baines's third book of "imaginative autobiography" begins in 1938 with "our hero . . . sweating out" the Munich crisis in Montevideo Harbour, but this episode, together with his hilarious experiences as a Conservative Party agent at Wimbledon, is merely a prelude to the outbreak of war and the author's departure to India to join an Officer Cadet Training Unit. Before this point, his style is often bumptious, over-assertive, deliberately irritable. He tended to fancy himself as a disillusioned diehard, an "unpopular aristo" of the French or Russian Revolution. But once he reached India his enormous self-consciousness seemed to trouble him less. Here, in the last years of the British Raj, he was able to enjoy the pretence that this was still Kipling's India. Instead of hammering and yammering his arguments at the reader, he begins now to use words with real bite to tell what he saw and felt:

> In the darkness imposed by the cyclone, a fear-maddened water-buffalo suddenly materialised in front of our Scammell and made as if to charge it, then veered away and vanished; . . . while in the same instant, I saw a *charpoy*, or stringed bed, bumping over the ground like an automaton, as if self-impelled by some interior set of hellish clockwork mechanisms, but most peculiar of all, it had an old woman strapped to it as on to a life-raft.

The story of the author's training as a gunner at Deolali (where, in theory, he bombarded his own troops), his journey by rail across Central India and his part in the defence of the North-West Frontier is told in a highly individual mixture of gusto, humour, observation, and personal idiosyncrasy. Mr Baines is not the kind of man to whom ordinar[y] things seem to happen. On the Fro[n]tier he was employed, at one time, [on] a large-scale operation against [a] single home-made cannon that w[as] carried about on the back of a cam[el] —incidentally, he claims to hav[e] killed the camel—and, at another, [in] a two-gun siege of a rebel-held sto[ne] tower, which reads, apart from a fe[w] anachronisms, like a skirmish fro[m] the English Civil War.

All this time, moreover, he was s[ur]rounded by characters as bizarre [as] his own adventures: a Muslim e[x]quisite at whose One Thousand a[nd] One Nights establishment the Eng[lish] officers "weltered in rose-wrea[ths,] jasmine-garlands and magical w[ea]pons; in sexual assignations, exe[cu]tions and whiffs of blood"; a vel[...] female member of a caravan wh[o] turned out to be a Cockney-swear[ing] Australian; and a succession [of] young Indian clerks and servants [of] whose personal attractions the auth[or] was not unaware. The Second Wor[ld] War seemed not only thousands [of] miles but a whole century away.

As an historical account of Ind[ia] and the Indian Army during [the] 1940s, *Officer Boy* can only b[e] classed as a picture in a distorti[ng] mirror, but the distortions are [...] amusingly grotesque and the surfac[e] has everywhere such burnish an[d] sparkle that many people shoul[d] thoroughly enjoy these far fro[m] plain tales from the hills.

Arthur Primrose Young, a[n] engineer now retired, had contact[s] with Karl Goerdeler, who oppo[sed] Hitler, and during the war, [...] worked with Ernest Bevin. He h[as] been much concerned with huma[n] relations in industry and with re[li]gious affairs, and in *Acros[s the] Years* (221pp. Charles Knight. £[...]) writes about his activities and exp[eri]ences with evident satisfaction.

Faust in a prose we can all understand

[...]'s Faust
[...]ed by Barker Fairley
[...] Toronto University Press.
[...]: Oxford University Press. £6.

[...] nineteenth-century translations [...] were the work of men for [whom] the dramatic poem was, at [least] in theory, a living genre, which [the] Romantics had used with success. In the same way, Matthew [Arnold]'s remarks on translating [Homer] were made by a man for [whom] verse narrative was a viable [form,] which he himself used. This [is] no longer true for us, so E. V. [Rieu] translated the *Odyssey* into [prose], showing thereby that it is not [only] an august epic but also "one [of] the best stories ever told". [Despi]te the efforts of T. S. Eliot and [Chri]stopher Fry, not only the drama[tic] poem but also the drama in verse [have] now ceased to be forms which [lead]ing poets use. The last transla[tions] of *Faust* into English verse [were] those by Louis MacNeice and [Phil]ip Wayne, made at a time when [Eliot] and Fry were still writing. [MacNe]ice's is the only translation [that] has proved suitable for pro[duction] (it was specifically made for [radio]) but it has other serious dis[advant]ages directly arising from this, [one of] which is that it is abridged. [The t]ime was ripe for a new integral [transl]ation of *Faust* suited for acting [as we]ll as reading, which must—[inevit]ably—be in prose. A new verse [version] would be a feeble ana[chroni]sm.

[Th]e first English prose translation [of Pa]rt I appeared in 1833, by [Abrah]am Hayward, and stood alone [for a] time. Nearly forty years later [Bayar]d Taylor, in the preface to his [own] verse rendering, pointed out [that it] was full of elementary errors [and] misunderstandings of the text. [It i]s not a reproach which can be [levell]ed at Barker Fairley, who is [one of] the most distinguished Goethe [scholar]s in the English-speaking [world.] [His] *Goethe as revealed in his [Poet]ry* (1932), *A Study of Goethe* [(194]7) and *Goethe's Faust: Six [Essay]s* (1953) are classics of their [kind.] His prose translation is the [fruit] of a lifetime of scholarly com[munin]g with the text; and a long [lifetim]e at that, for in the year his [transl]ation appeared he celebrated [his] eighty-third birthday. It con[forms] to Bayard Taylor's require[ment]: "Where all the restraints of verse are flung aside, we should expect, at least, as accurate a reproduction of the sense, spirit and tone of the original as our language will permit."

One thing is quite clear; if one feels inclined to differ at any point from Professor Fairley's rendering (and many people will want to differ passionately) it will not be because the translator has not understood the text. It may well be because out of several possible renderings he has chosen one which the reader does not favour; this is a natural hazard with any translation. It will more likely be because the reader feels that Professor Fairley's prose is too prosaic, that something which he prizes in the original German which he thinks need not be lost has been lost, or something unnecessary inserted.

Before giving way to these feelings, he will need to look at the text very carefully indeed. "Habe nun ach Philosophie . . ." becomes: "Look at me. I've worked right through philosophy, right through medicine, and jurisprudence, as they call it, and that wretched theology too." These, the best-known lines in the whole work, are quite remarkably testing, and successive translators have found them so. Here for instance is Elizabeth Craigmyle in 1889:

> I've studied now Philosophy
> And Jurisprudence, Medicine,—
> And even, alas! Theology,—
> From end to end, with labour keen

And Philip Wayne in 1949:

> Philosophy have I digested,
> The whole of Law and Medicine,
> From each its secrets I have wrested,
> Theology, alas, thrown in.

(One could be forgiven for thinking that the dates were the other way round.)

Neither of these translations, whatever other virtues they may have, are suitable as the first words of a drama, which have to rivet the audience's attention from the outset of a monologue lasting for 130 lines. They both render words on a page, not words in space in a situational context, and neither translator has stopped to consider just what the force of "nun ach" might be, or what stylistic level Goethe is operating with here. It is assumed that the first words of a lofty masterpiece must themselves be lofty, but in fact Goethe is exercising his well-known talent for plain statement.

As the omission of the subject pronoun shows, the language here is colloquial and Professor Fairley renders it colloquially. "Look at me" turns out to have better justification than appeared at first sight, so that we are inclined to accept "that wretched theology" with gratitude for the neat avoidance of "alas!", only to be brought up against "jurisprudence, as they call it". Here surely, we cry, is a quite gratuitous addition; "as they call it" is not in the German . . . But the translator is rendering the slangy, pejorative flavour of "Juristerei"; one may not like the way he has done it but he has at least coped neatly with a problem which other translators have not even noticed.

And so on through the drama, both parts, all 12,110 lines of it; at just those points where one feels inclined to protest, one realizes on second thoughts that Professor Fairley is rendering something one had not seen but which his learning and his loving study of the text have shown him, and that he is rendering it into plain prose. One checks on familiar lines – "Du gleichst dem Geist, den du begreifst" and finds: "You are not equal. You are only equal to what you think I am", which incorporates lapidary formulation of volumes of commentary. "Zwei Seelen wohnen, ach, in meiner Brust" becomes: "As for myself [and one suddenly realizes that the context demands a stress on "meiner" as well as on "zwei"] there are two of me, unreconciled." On the other hand, "Das also war des Pudels Kern" is admittedly not one of the greatest lines in *Faust* (though it is one of the most quoted), but "So you were the poodle, were you?" seems a bit too flat. This is one of the relatively few cases where the apparently flat translation cannot be justified.

These are all examples of the way Professor Fairley has envisaged each speech, each sentence, as an element in a dramatic situation and rendered it accordingly. This process could easily lead to slick paraphrase for dramatic effect, but he has avoided it because he is a scholar and an honest man. The result is a *Faust* entirely new to English readers and new in some respects to a good many Goethe scholars too.

So far we have looked closely at familiar passages; if we step back and get a general view, what do we see? Most readers of the German, and of previous English translations, are thrilled by Part One and bored by Part Two, which they have been taught to regard as a portentous work whose profundities are unlikely to be plumbed by ordinary mortals, and so people are understandably not keen on reading it; forgetting (or not knowing) that Goethe spoke of it as "diese sehr ernsten Scherze". The last thing one expects to find is jesting; to expect such a thing would be disrespectful to the sublimest work of Germany's sublimest poet.

Professor Fairley tackles it in Goethe's own spirit; he brings out the irony, the humour, the vitality of scenes often thought ponderous, and to one's surprise one finds oneself enjoying, for instance, the scenes at the emperor's court, the Classical Walpurgis night, Homunculus, and Euphorion for their own sake, and Helen's love-scene with Faust takes on a new tenderness. Instead of getting bogged down in half-understood symbolism, the reader can follow through scene upon sovereign scene to the final assumption of the hero without being forced to look deeper than he need or encouraged to believe that everything is on the surface. On a different plane, one is brought to realize that *Faust II* can be as exciting as *The Lord of the Rings* and as light as light opera. This is in fact how Goethe himself saw it: he stressed the affinities of certain scenes with opera and wished for Mozartian music to accompany his text.

This version is superbly conceived for the stage, not by cutting scenes, as MacNeice's was, but by the dramatic drafting of every individual speech and the rendering of each of them in *spoken* English. This last is not without its problems: spoken English prose is not the best *dramatic* vehicle for the various songs (the archangels' song, the song of the flea, the King in Thule, etc) and one would expect that a producer would feel the need for verse (and of course music) at these points. "Gretchen am Spinnrade", on the other hand, which is less a song than a lyrical monologue, comes out very well. The way Professor Fairley copes with the famous rhyme scene between Faust and Helen is quite brilliant, but one feels that the ingenuity is misplaced —it ought not to have been necessary, if he had been willing to be just a little more flexible. His rendering has been successfully performed in Canada; perhaps we may see it here too.

It ought to convince the young that Goethe's poem has something to give them, for it is written in a language they understand; and it is very much to be hoped that it will soon be available in paperback. When it is, the illustrations by Randy Jones should be omitted; they are accomplished and in their way delightful, but they lead back into the world of gadzookery and vital-stapping that Professor Fairley's text has at last got us clear of. They symbolize all those things which, in Barker Fairley's words in a different context, have "stood from the beginning between the English reading public and the living language of *Faust*" and which it has been his aim to overcome. It was a noble aim, and its achievement crowns a distinguished career of interpreting German literature to English readers.

When aspiration outruns achievement

[HE]NRI PEYRE :
[Qu'est-]ce que le romantisme ?
[...]pp. Paris: Presses Universitaires [de] France. 18fr.

[For] more than thirty years Henri [Peyre]'s *Qu'est-ce que le classicisme ?* [has] been for many a classic of [Fren]ch criticism. *Qu'est-ce que le [roman]tisme ?* tackles a still more [thorn]y problem. Professor Peyre [sets] out to show that the originality, [depth] and lasting influence of French [Rom]anticism have been under[estim]ated; to compare the Romantic [stat]e of mind in France with its [pred]ecessors and with other European literatures (mainly English and [Ger]man); and to trace it from 1760 [to] the present day, not simply in the "literary" genres, the visual arts and [mus]ic, but in its relation to historical, [pol]itical, social and religious movements.

[Su]ch a panoramic programme ob[vious]ly savours of the Romantics' [own] aspirations towards an impossible infinite. Professor Peyre is at [his] best when demolishing dusty [stere]otypes: he attacks in turn over[-sub]tle definitions; over-erudite [assu]mptions that writers have read [their] predecessors and contemporaries [in] many languages, or necessarily [that] practice coincide with theory; [fool]ish modernizations which weave [pat]terns from fragments of the past [tak]en out of context; weary clichés on [ind]ividualism or alienation. Some of [the] stalking-horses may indeed have [die]d already. But his conspectus of a [vast] field, his sense of when to leave an open question (particularly around rash parallels between literary, political and industrial revolutions) and especially his constant suggestion of fruitful subjects for new work, are all grounds for gratitude. Unfortunately the need to compress such a vast subject into 300 pages leaves some serious gaps between intentions and results.

Three chapters examine problems between 1760 and 1830, and rightly indicate the need for more work on the Empire period. The five chapters on the Romantic period proper are divided thematically: Romanticism and Revolution; Pessimism; Torment of Time and Space; Religion and Religions; Eloquence, Imagination and Symbol. The main writers or thinkers are here fragmented and tend to become submerged in a plethora of (sometimes valuable) information and careful reservations. Lists of facts and attitudes alternate with moments when a minor author receives disproportionate space, giving sometimes an odd effect of combined solidity and scrappiness. In the long last chapter—on the persistence of Romanticism from the mid-nineteenth century until today—some major authors are given separate treatment. The evidence is at times strangely chosen; Flaubert's *Education sentimentale* is never mentioned, and the discussion of Mallarmé's attitude to his marriage at the age of twenty might have been sacrificed to more vital problems. The choice of twentieth-century figures and movements is modestly presented as arbitrary, though it is fairly far-reaching; some chapter-headings ("Céline, Camus, Élie Faure, Apollinaire") provide strange bedfellows. Surrealism and Claudel are given pride of place.

Whereas the introduction rightly insists on the importance of other genres besides lyric poetry, the novels of the Romantic period rarely appear, and the theatre scarcely at all. Some judgments raise strong objections: that Benjamin Constant was more preoccupied with his love-affairs than with political problems; that the 1848 Revolution was the result of ideas and not of social or political circumstances; that Baudelaire's "Le Voyage" is sadly prosaic and jerky; that Proust sentimentalizes over *François le Champi*. . . . One or two outstanding lines of poetry are distorted by being quoted from memory.

Important questions are raised: what was the differing impact of the French Revolution in France, England and Germany? Were the English Romantics more isolated from their public than the French? How far does theorizing about the imagination impinge on the capacity to exercise it? and much else. The chapter on eloquence rightly stresses that it is time for a discriminating reassessment of the poetic qualities of Romantic rhetoric, but only once or twice is there a glancing attempt to prove these qualities by analysis. Professor Peyre does not directly tackle the vital question: how far does the lasting value of the best writers or thinkers depend on the elements here characterized as Romantic; how far on other qualities in their individual powers of expression, reaction or control? The quotations which crown his introduction and conclusion—where Michel Butor and Pierre Reverdy stigmatize all successive reactions against Romanticism as still-born—leave the reader wondering about the total absence of Paul Valéry from a final chapter so thick with nineteenth and twentieth-century names. For Valéry, too, might well have been shown to stem from Romantic aspirations as here characterized; and he, above all, would raise the essential problem of how these potential values may be organized and expressed.

This book conveys through its own approach many of the qualities it attributes to Romanticism: encyclopedic ambitions, broad human sympathies, a sense that the individual differs from any group or movement, a conviction that in the nature of things appetite outruns achievement. It attacks out-of-date manuals, but appears in a series obviously designed to give a concentrate of knowledge. Its selection of material is rich on some sides, on others, arbitrary; its conclusions are sometimes over-general or debatable. Its contribution lies not so much in problems solved as in questions asked, some intentionally and penetratingly, others through peripheral provocation to the reader.

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Napoleon in trouble

ANTONY BRETT-JAMES (Editor):
Europe against Napoleon
The Leipzig Campaign, 1813, from Eyewitness Accounts
320pp. Macmillan. £3.25.

GILBERT MARTINEAU:
Napoleon Surrenders
Translated by Frances Partridge
231pp. John Murray. £3.50.

PATRICK TURNBULL:
Napoleon's Second Empress
304pp. Michael Joseph. £4.

After a long period of relative neglect, the three years of Napoleon's life from 1812 to 1815 during which he plunged from disaster to disaster seem to be currently fashionable; books devoted to them have recently outnumbered all others concerning him to an extent beyond coincidence. The reasons for this no doubt lie somewhere in our own present discontents, but the trend is clear. In view of this and of the fact that nothing about her has appeared in English for forty years, Marie Louise was an obvious choice for biographers, and Patrick Turnbull is first past the post. By contrast, the fifty days between Waterloo and the sailing of Northumberland for Saint Helena have already been the subject of three books in five years, and Gilbert Martineau has now added a fourth. With the Leipzig holocaust, Antony Brett-James has completed a trilogy whose other components are the Russian and Waterloo campaigns.

The "eye-witness" method of presenting history is analogous to the television news story; it gives us a good idea of what was going on, but for why it happened and how it related to anything else we are dependent on the brief interjections of the commentator. In *Europe against Napoleon* Mr Brett-James might perhaps have done more to illuminate the tactical developments of a confused and confusing battle, but in the main his economical commentary sets the scene well and leads deftly from one well-chosen extract to the next.

He calls on scores of witnesses, some famous, others obscure and not previously translated, and he uses them skilfully to produce an effect which comes as near as is possible in an armchair to evoking the grandeur and misery and occasional comedy of war, the sights, sounds and smells of a great battle. There are memorable incidents galore: an exhausted Napoleon whistling "Malbrook s'en va-t-en guerre"; Macdonald weeping as his soldiers cry to him across the Elster, "Marshal, save your children"; Parquin dining off the dead sergeant's hare; the battered civilians and their ravaged homes; the grisly hospital scenes. Not least, there is England's one contribution to the battle: Captain Bogue's rocket battery, whose commander unhappily died in action but whose unorthodox weaponry seems to have been more effective than usual.

Leipzig was the second disaster: Napoleon's surrender and banishment are often presented as the last. Was he inveigled by Maitland's "cynical lying" into believing that he could end his days in the quiet pursuits of the English countryside? Like many before him, M Martineau worries round the question and decides that he was. But there is hardly a case. Even if some of Maitland's off-the-record remarks were unwise, and whatever construction Savary and Las Cases may have placed on them, Napoleon knew better than any man alive that an officer cannot speak for his government without formal instructions, which Maitland neither had nor claimed to have. They parted on terms of respect and Napoleon himself never at any time accused the captain of "duplicity". His barbs were reserved for the British Government, though it may be doubted whether he really hoped for different treatment.

There may still be a few interesting facts to be unearthed relating to how the Saint Helena decision was reached in the inner recesses of HMG. If there are, M Martineau does not pursue them but travels with Napoleon and his suite along a well-worn path unlikely to yield anything new of value. That he does not mention any of his immediate precursors is no great matter. *Napoleon Surrenders* covers the same ground in much the same way with almost identical documentation at least as well as any of them and, admirably translated by Frances Partridge, it is better written than most.

Nearly a year before Napoleon surrendered his fate to an English naval captain, his wife had surrendered her body to a one-eyed Austrian field-marshal. Despite some rather slapdash historical judgments, *Napoleon's Second Empress* is a fair and balanced account of Marie Louise's life, and should provide all that a non-specialist reader will wish to know about her. The subject being who she was, for her biographer to dwell somewhat on the theme of sex is quite proper, but Mr Turnbull goes beyond probability and the facts in suggesting that her father's lust killed three wives: two died in childbirth, one of consumption.

But Marie Louise did come of a lecherous stock, and, virgin as she presumably was, she seems to have enjoyed her famous wedding night with a feared husband she had never set eyes on. Thereafter, though Mr Turnbull rightly acquits her of the nymphomania she is often credited with, sex probably was her dominant interest. There was a little ladylike dabbling in sightseeing and the arts and a good deal of hypochondria; she was capable of infatuation, perhaps even love, just so long as the loved one was around, and was a fond mother just so long as this did not interfere with more important affairs. Apart from her tiny political role, she is interesting because of the effect she had on two men who, except in bed, were of a quality far beyond her: she did inspire a real affection in Napoleon, and Neipperg sacrificed a great career for her.

Politically this great-granddaughter of Maria Theresa and granddaughter of the formidable Maria Carolina of Naples was about the most negative woman ever thrust by birth and chance before the footlights of history. In the dark days of April, 1814, when her own personal future was at stake and despite her unquestionable authority as Regent, she remained totally passive. Later, she left the government of Parma entirely to the chamberlains appointed by Metternich. But at least she liked Parma and showed her subjects there a gracious and smiling face. As Empress of the French she was frigid, taciturn, bored to all but her husband and a few of her staff. She had barriers to overcome if she was to achieve respect and popularity. That she failed to do so, failed even to try, was one of many small imponderables that weakened Napoleon during the last great struggles and gives her a causal as well as a purely chronological role in the story of his fall.

Top dynasts

EDWARD CRANKSHAW:
The Habsburgs
272pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson. £3.75.

The Habsburgs were the most magnificent of all the dynasties of continental Europe, holding greater power for a longer period than any other. Their greatest age was the sixteenth century, when they held the Low Countries, Spain and Portugal, the vast overseas empires of the two latter states, and large parts of Italy and of Central Europe, as well as the shadowy authority over Germany deriving from the Imperial title. At this time they embodied to some extent the idea of universal monarchy. It was their duty and their glory to spread Christianity in the New World, and to defend the faith in the Old World from the parallel threats of the heretics and the Turks.

Their great enterprises were largely if not wholly frustrated, and the Western and the Danubian branches went different ways. In the eighteenth century the latter, greatly increased in territory at the expense of the Ottomans and the Italians, became a Great Power in their own right. Austria's greatest age lasted only until the defeat of Napoleon, but there was still another century marked by the outward semblance of Imperial power, during which literature, the arts and sciences richly flourished, and at least a growing minority, of several languages and of many different religious beliefs and languages, enjoyed a brilliant civilization.

It might be objected against Edward Crankshaw's book that it is in fact concerned almost entirely with the Austrian Habsburgs. It has one short chapter on Philip II, but the history of Habsburg Spain is virtually ignored. Within its narrower scope, however, it is an enjoyable and worthwhile book. Mr Crankshaw, the author of good biographies of Maria Theresa and Francis Joseph, is thoroughly at home with the personalities and the cultural history of Austria. Here he rightly concentrates on the individual rulers, but sets them against their background of European politics, Turkish wars, Baroque architecture and music and nineteenth-century social and national conflicts. His brief survey of a vast theme is fair and compassionate, well balanced in choice of subjects, and written in an easy and pleasant style.

The illustrations which form a large part of the book deserve high praise. There are splendid scenes of crowds in war and peace. Titian's Charles V at the Battle of Mühlberg, from the Prado, has been preferred to the more moving later Titian portrait from Munich, of the seated emperor deep in thought. Surprisingly, neither the great tomb of Frederick III in the Stefanskirche nor that of Rudolf I from Speyer cathedral, where he is buried, appear. Taken as a whole, the illustrations delight the eye and should greatly increase the general reader's understanding of the Habsburgs and their world.

Taming the workers

DIMITRY POSPIELOVSKY:
Russian Police Trade Unionism
189pp. London School of Economics and Political Science and Weidenfeld and Nicolson. £2.50.

Zubatov in the 1890s was the head of the Tsarist Okhrana—the crown of an apparently normal career in the secret police. In 1896 he was concerned in the arrest of Social-Democratic leaders engaged in agitation among the workers and in attempts to organize them in trade unions. Believing that the mass of workers were faithful to the Tsar, he conceived the idea of creating "loyal" trade unions under police patronage and supervision, which would rule out any political aims, but sponsor the day-to-day economic grievances of the workers.

For a few years at the turn of the century this experiment, doubtfully approved by the Ministry of the Interior, enjoyed substantial success among the Moscow workers. It never made much headway in St Petersburg—perhaps because the Social-Democrats had been more effective there—though it is said to have paved the way for the analogous efforts of the priest, Gapon, a few years later. The Zubatov unions were naturally anathema to Social-Democrats and revolutionaries. They were the very epitome of what were known in the Western world as "yellow" unions; and, enjoying both governmental tolerance and governmental subsidies, they were in a strong position to compete with the Social-Democratic unions in wooing the workers. No Soviet historian can find a good word to say for them.

Dimitri Pospielovsky has set out to redress the balance. He points out that the protection of the workers had not been absent from the thought of Russian publicists and administrators. Labour legislation had come in with Catherine the Great, though, like most of that monarch's enlightened ideas, imported from abroad, it had had little relation to Russian practice. A factory inspectorate was set up in the 1880s. Factory owners had even been known to complain against the attempts to protect the workers against them.

Zubatov had therefore sure ground in theory, though scarcely in practice, on which to build. There is no reason to doubt that, like other good civil servants, he became emotionally identified with his job, sincerely tried to promote the welfare of the workers, and wanted to help them to organize themselves. He probably achieved less than he imagined. When Mr Pospielovsky tells us that the Zubatov unions were "the first truly trade-unionist organizations in Russia proper", that treacherous little word "truly" begs a host of questions. So, incidentally, does the remark that the policies of Nicholas II were anti-Judaic but not antisemitic.

What finally broke the Zubatov unions was not the hostility of the workers or the revolutionaries, who had still scarcely penetrated the factories, but the hostility of the government. Witte, a spokesman of the industrialists, was bitterly opposed to them—perhaps the best testimony to their efficacy; and Pleve, who took office as Minister of the Interior in 1902, after a brief period of grudging toleration of Zubatov, turned against him. This was really the end. Zubatov was accused, justly or unjustly, of organizing a strike in Odessa, of conspiring against Pleve, and of divulging state secrets. By 1904 the whole enterprise had been wound up. Not much more is known about Zubatov, except that he committed suicide in March, 1917, on learning of the Tsar's abdication. What manner of man he really was remains something of a mystery.

The moral to be drawn from this old story will depend on the political standpoint of the writer, and in part also on his attitude to the historical process. Either he will say (as Mr Pospielovsky says several times) that if only Zubatov had been allowed to carry on, a more liberal régime might have emerged, and the workers would not have rallied to the revolutionary banner. Or he will say (with equal plausibility) that the defeat of Zubatov shows that the régime of Nicholas II and his ministers could never tolerate a workers' movement with any semblance of independence, and that it was precisely this attitude which finally polarized society between the two camps and led to revolution. Mr Pospielovsky, though he does not conceal his bias, has given a fair and scholarly account of the episode; it is a pity that he has somewhat disfigured his book by an irrelevant and polemical epilogue.

The Wizard at Westminster

KENNETH O. MORGAN:
The Age of Lloyd George
233pp. Allen and Unwin. £3.25 (paperback, £1.95).

The Welsh Wizard proves strangely attractive to the serious historian. Nor is it altogether easy to explain the attraction. Possibly the feeling uppermost in the minds of many of us is that neither friend nor foe has really explained the enigma of Lloyd George. Looking back to his career we feel that it is almost incredible that one so powerful was in the end so unsuccessful, and that one compounded of such obvious charm and brilliance should finally have been mistrusted almost to the point of ridicule by Parliament and people. Kenneth Morgan would not pretend that his book gives a convincing solution to the problem of Lloyd George, but it is helpful. Moreover, it is extremely clearly written and is reinforced by sympathy and true perception. The second half of the book consists of a selection of documents to illustrate the text.

The thread of argument which runs through *The Age of Lloyd George*, and carries conviction with it, is that Lloyd George, owing to his Welsh origins, came to Westminster as an outsider and "an outsider he remained". Here some comparison with Aneurin Bevan is obvious. The difference between them is possibly that Bevan felt that, in spite of its deviations, the Labour Party was his abiding home whereas Lloyd George, except possibly as a very young man, never had that feeling for the Liberal Party. The fact that he was an outsider and consequently independent from his Liberal colleagues in the First World War was felt by the public and meant that he was untarnished by the criticism which was freely expressed for all his colleagues. There is a clear parallel here between Lloyd George, and Palmerston in the Aberdeen Coalition Government in 1855. In 1855, as in 1916, events were inexorably pointing to a change of Prime Minister; Palmerston wisely stood back from any attempt to influence the tide of feeling; Lloyd George, on the other hand, gives the impression that he was trying to manipulate events and persons for his own advantage. Mr Morgan reflects on Lloyd George's position in 1916 and shrewdly says that Asquith and the Liberal Party were in some measure his prisoners whom he could "sustain or destroy". Probably it was impossible to sustain them, as was proved when Churchill attempted to sustain Neville Chamberlain at the time of the invasion of Norway. But the weapon of destruction was to hand and Lloyd George used it.

If the position of outsider had great advantages in the war, they rapidly diminished thereafter. The weight of contemporary opinion which developed against Lloyd George has possibly received insufficient notice from historians who have been too ready to accept some of his own excuses for this. Mr Morgan plays down the severe judgment of his contemporaries and tells us for example that Keynes "wildly exaggerated" Lloyd George's share in the more loathsome parts of the 1918 election campaign. Keynes was not prone to wild exaggeration, and Mr Morgan will not mind being asked to consider one further point. He tells us that when Lloyd George was speaking at Bristol about making Germany pay for the war, he used an unguarded impromptu at an overflow meeting about "searching their pockets for the money". Some would explain the matter quite differently. For many days Northcliffe, in the *Daily Mail*, had been running a violent campaign against Lloyd George because he had not made it clear that he was in favour of Germany being made to pay in full. For several days before the Bristol speech the paper had screamed at its readers, "He still has not said it". At Bristol he said it, in the slang of the day, "with knobs on". Moreover he substantiated later this policy in a handout to the press—"Trial of the Kaiser, Punishment of those responsible for Atrocities, Fullest Indemnities from Germany, and Britain for the British". By the last extraordinary phrase he meant the expulsion of all enemy aliens. When Keynes tells us that Lloyd George spoke these things in order to satisfy the appetites of the moment, we can only feel that he is speaking with moderation and without exaggeration.

Original, yes, but pleasing?

MARK GIROUARD:
The Victorian Country House
... Clarendon Press: Oxford University Press. £12.

... possible question or quibble is ... by Mark Girouard in *The Victorian Country House*. If ... wonders what was the dividing-line between castle and houses, or ... vicarages are excluded when ... provide the background to so ... outstanding Victorians, it is ... here: answered succinctly and ... wider sources of knowledge ... the question put.

Mr Girouard uses articles that have ... in *Country Life* from his ... pen and from those of other contributors, notably John Cornforth, ... preface makes clear. He deals ... with the English country house, ... is, as he says, to be distinguished from the house in the country ... small house. Country houses ... the same as the "Stately Homes" ... commemorated by Felicia ...:

The Stately Homes of England
How beautiful they stand!
Amidst their tall ancestral trees
O'er all the pleasant land.

... also right to include trees, for ... grounds are an integral part of ... country house; if there is ... development alongside the ... open-cast mining up to the ..., it is a picture out of its ...

... without anyone to live ... these houses are dead. Perhaps a more apposite version of Miss ...'s poem is from Noël ...:

The Stately apartments keep
Their historical renown —
It's wiser not to sleep there
In case they tumble down.

... Ministry of the Environment ... helping to prop them up with ... generosity and not insisting ... meaning pre-Victorian. ... of the houses have moved ... the opening pages of *Country* ... the estate agents advertisements proliferate—they are seldom described as "gems" or "charming" nor indeed as "easily maintained". For they were built in an era of conspicuous expenditure when comfort was less important than an ostentation intended to bring their owners into the same world as the aristocracy living in houses of similar grandeur—though much less discomfort, for a Georgian house is conveniently compact and a Tudor mansion usually had its dining hall exactly opposite the kitchen or buttery, as in College Halls, not away in a basement or a separate wing. Tranby Croft is the prime example of *nouveau riche* building, where the locality had also been carefully chosen, since it was near enough to Newmarket for the Prince of Wales and his racing friends to use as an hotel with scant courtesy to host and hostess.

The one thing that does seem to have emerged usefully as a functional innovation was the owner's business room with a separate entrance, where he could interview his agent and tenants. This persists in the doctor's surgery and is now a feature incorporated in the Church Commissioners' designs for new vicarages: parishioners are no longer invited to join the family at a spacious tea spread in the dining-room or to cider in the servants' hall, according to class. Queen Anne's Bounty went by the board some years ago.

Everything is always earlier than one thinks, like photography or the use of steam power, and here we find concrete being used at Corsham as early as 1845 and its most "daring use at Down Hall, near Harlow (1871-1873) where the main structure and external facades are of poured and shuttered concrete". Similarly, indoors, Walter Scott had installed gas lighting (albeit unsatisfactory) at Abbotsford in 1823, and there had been experiments in steam central-heating in the library at Bowood in 1790. Such experiments accelerated with typical Victorian expansionism under the amateur technicians and inventors who had made money in industry, like Francis Wright at Osmaston who designed a system of hot air heating which circulated through the house downwards. Osmaston was pulled down in the autumn of 1964, her towers and turrets stoutly resisting: "She doesn't want to go", the demolition foreman observed.

Another house with an inventor-owner was Tettenhall Towers (not called just "Tettenhall", which is an ancient parish listed as Regis in Domesday), where Colonel Thorneycroft designed a hall on indiarubber springs and iron rollers. It was panelled in wood from Tewkesbury Abbey, like many Victorian great halls which made use of the box pews of the "restored" parish church for decoration. It was this vandalism at Tewkesbury which roused William Morris to found the "anti-scrape" Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings.

Neither Osmaston nor Tettenhall Towers is illustrated here (although the latter now belongs to a school which has preserved many of its features) and there is some confusion over which houses rate inclusion in the catalogue: for instance, Tregothnan is illustrated but is not in the catalogue, and it would be useful to have been told which houses are still standing and which are open to the public, whether privately or through the National Trust.

Admirable as are Mr Girouard's study and his comprehensive provision of illustrations, one may ask the simple question whether these houses were beautiful? Looking through them, the main impression is of eclecticism: here are Jacobethan fronts, ecclesiastical arches and vaulting, medieval castellation: all Camelot-type. The only originality is the use of red brick and tiles in "structural polychromy" which reached its climax, architecturally and morally, under Ruskin's influence in the Venetian Gothic of the Parks Museum in Oxford opposite Keble—and, indeed, in the "holy zebra" of Keble itself. Original, but is it pleasing? The houses must be kept as period pieces at which we may marvel if we do not admire.

Ideological improvements

HELEN ROSENAU:
Social Purpose in Architecture
Paris and London, Compared, 1760-...
... Studio Vista. £3.75.

... Britain had had a Boullée ... Ledoux, what a remarkable ... this would have been. The ... Dance, it is true, showed ... in his design for Newgate ...—some of the vigorous ... of plain geometrical masses ... which those French architects ... to astonish each generation ... discovers them. Soane had a ... of genius for spatial invention ... and Gandy for scale and ...; yet Britain rivalled the ... of approach and originality of form shown by the French ... radical architects only through ... engineers of a generation later ... Telford, Brunel and ... Stephenson—and then only ... by-product of technological ...

... Rosenau would say, perhaps, that the French neo-classicism ... also a by-product, of a new ... in the social role of architecture—that indeed is the thesis ... *Social Purpose in Architecture*— ... fact remains that Boullée ... Ledoux were architects first of ... their aim in responding to ... newly emergent social demands ... the creation of architecture as ... the fulfilment of function.

... dominate the pages of this ... and not only because Dr ... is the acknowledged authority ... their work and was therefore ... the strongest position to relate ... the aspirations of their time. ... provide the clearest link between ... the new values that were being ... politically and socially, ... of the French Revolution ... parallel changes in architecture a link that was obscured in Britain by the Romantic movement.

In the comparison she makes the British contribution is for this reason less positive and clear-cut, although belief in progress was just as stalwart on this side of the Channel. On the other hand more of the British projects illustrated were actually built. Dr Rosenau is illuminating on the differences between the aims and origins of the French and the British developments. In France the impetus came from intellectuals and men of letters; in Britain from economists, architects, farmers, and philanthropists, who were concerned with practical results rather than with theory. In France the improvement of the city was regarded as paramount while in Britain, in spite of the impending Industrial Revolution (or, possibly, because of it), there was a hankering after the countryside and its amenities.

Among the French philosophers an exception, however, was Babeuf, who disapproved of cities as making equality impossible through the prevalence (not necessarily, one must presume, in connivance with each other) of "artists, priests, procurers and thieves", and Dr Rosenau quotes Babeuf's own recommendation (as translated by Buonarroti in 1850):

No more capitals, no more large cities ... when there are no more palaces, there will be no more huts; the houses will be simple and the magnificence of architecture and the arts ..., will be reserved for public stores, for amphitheatres, for circuses, for aqueducts, for bridges, for canals, for public squares, for archives, for libraries, and above all for the places which are dedicated to the deliberations of magistrates and the exercise of the popular will.

Not a bad recipe for today.

In spite of Britain's yearning after the prolongation of rusticity, a number of projects aimed at the amelioration of urban conditions were produced at this time, and Dr Rosenau analyses them under various categories—hospitals, prisons, educational institutions and so on. Among these are Kelsall's already well-known design for a university, published in 1814, John Gandy's competition design for a New Bethlem Hospital in Lambeth (more original than the design by James Lewis which was built), Dance's St Luke's Hospital (built in 1784 but now demolished), and the original Guy's Hospital, some of whose eighteenth-century buildings still remain, embedded among the hospital's overpowering extensions.

Dr Rosenau has in fact collected an interesting number of projects, British and French, and she does succeed in justifying her thesis with their help. In spite of its somewhat misleading title (which might have indicated a contemporary tract of the left) and its hardly more explanatory subtitle (which only suggests an episode in town-planning history), this book is a genuine work of scholarship which opens up avenues that could well be explored further. It makes a stimulating change from the usual consideration of architectural history in terms only of stylistic variation.

Hal Cheetham's *Portrait of Oxford* (240pp. Robert Hale. £2.30) is historical as well as impressionistic, and a story which starts with surmises as to why the Romans never settled there, ends with reflections on how much of the quintessential Oxford can survive in the face of modern developments. He remains on the whole sanguine about the future of the dreaming city in spite of traffic jams, ring-roads and the shadow of Cowley. A bibliography shows wide acquaintance with the mass of modern Oxford literature.

Master Finn

Alvar Aalto
Volume 2: 1963-1970
248pp. Pall Mall. £10.

Alvar Aalto—the Finnish master who is one of the dominating figures in modern architecture—is nearing seventy-four. This book (a companion volume to that published by Girsberger of Zürich in 1963, in which all Aalto's buildings and projects up to that year were illustrated) is thus a record of his work between the ages of sixty-five and seventy-two. Although it is to be hoped that he will design many more buildings, he is not likely to develop his personal style much further; so on the work shown in his volume his mature style can fairly be judged.

What are its outstanding characteristics? First, the completed buildings shown in this volume (which begin with his town-hall at Seinäjoki and end with his tower block of flats at Lucerne, Switzerland) have a hard—sometimes almost a harsh—angularity of form and a preference for materials that can be precisely profiled: both of which are in contrast with the romantic ease and informality, the craftsman-like handling of brick and timber and the flair for creating structures that seem to grow out of the landscape, which made him a unique figure in the 1930s. This was the work that served to reassure so many people that modern architecture, however far it departed from the old stylistic conventions, could still be human and sympathetic. It is true that his very earliest buildings, for example his sanatorium at Paimio, are hard rather than soft, but then he was experimenting with the forms that naturally emerged from the use of a relatively new material, reinforced concrete. Paimio displayed the bare bones of its construction, whereas the more recent hardness comes from the precise modelling of an applied covering of tile or marble.

More to the point, perhaps, is that his later buildings have an urban context (it is strange that an architect so famous in his own country should have been given no opportunity to build in its capital city until he was fifty-five). The most influential of his earlier buildings—those that established the recognizable Aalto handwriting—were in an open landscape which encouraged his skill in relating buildings to their setting. In a modern city street the setting is the least permanent of the factors that may influence a building's design.

From his lifelong success in designing in sympathy with the landscape arises the question of the close connexion between his work and its Finnish background. His international fame has naturally brought him many invitations to build in other countries, increasingly so in recent years, with the result that of the thirty-eight buildings and projects included in this volume no less than eighteen are outside Finland. They reinforce the impression made before—in fact made by his dormitory building at Cambridge, Mass, as long ago as 1947, and his disappointing Hansaviertel housing at Berlin of 1955—that away from his own country his touch becomes less sure and his decisions somehow more arbitrary. It may not be simply a matter of landscape and climate; there may be more difficulty when working abroad in getting imaginative ideas translated into actual building, and the knowledge of this may be an inhibiting factor. The fact remains that to see the real Aalto one must journey to Finland.

These comments on changes discernible in Aalto's later work do not suggest a significant decline. The qualities that make him one of the great architects of his time are discernible in many of the projects illustrated here: his attention to detail, his consequent ability to make each design all of a piece, his fluent planning, his geometrical invention that is nevertheless an outcome of his clear sense of how a building is going to be used.

Proof of his ability still to rise to an exceptional challenge is his Finlandia concert and congress hall at Helsinki, the first instalment of the new cultural centre that he himself has laid out. It is shown in this volume only as a project, but the building is now complete. It was in fact inaugurated on December 2, 1971, and in it the visitor will see planning and the creation of internal spaces of a quality and imagination that make it a worthy climax to a notable career—or perhaps there are other climaxes to come; seventy-four is not such a great age for an architect.

BARBARA W. TUCHMAN
Sand Against The Wind
Stilwell and the American Experience in China, 1911-45
"Against the broad tapestry of modern China's history, the American army officer Joseph Warren Stilwell's life is spread, a strange pattern among the larger patterns that surround it. It is Barbara Tuchman's triumph that she has marshalled the unruly facts and told the two stories—three, if we count her exposition of American Far East policy—concurrently, without losing her sense of proportion. She has magnificent control over detail."
The Times Literary Supplement
Macmillan £5.95

THE TIMES

T·L·S

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Commentary

After great difficulties a new Czech Writers' Union was finally established a few weeks ago, a fact which was officially greeted in Czechoslovakia as an important achievement on the road towards "normalization". It has taken the regime a very long time to bring Czech writers to order, and the new union is still far from normal. Its membership has been restricted to just ninety-five (compared to about 400 before 1968) and even Dr Husák is reported to have complained that he did not know anyone in the list submitted for his approval.

Virtually all the Czech writers whose names and books are well known both in Czechoslovakia and abroad are staying outside the union, evidently because they have not obeyed the exhortations to renounce their "incorrect views". They would also find it difficult to subscribe to the new union's ideological programme, declaring in time-worn clichés its unshakable adherence to the doctrine of socialist realism, whatever that may mean after the disastrous past experience with this highly elusive term.

The membership of the new union consists mainly of lapsed writers, the like of which may be encountered in all countries of the Soviet block: the sad princes of literary officialdom who for some reason have either entirely lost the capacity to write or who cannot write well and, rather than engage in a different profession, try to make up for their deficiency by acquiring political influence.

In fact, many of the best-known Czech writers do not live in Czechoslovakia at all: having left the country after the 1968 invasion, they settled all over the world, from West Germany to California. Such a large-scale exodus of intellectuals might have serious consequences for the country's cultural life, but they knew only too well that they would be unable to write and publish anyway and that even their older work would be banned and removed from all libraries; fears which proved to have been fully justified.

On the other hand, with so many people having emigrated from Czechoslovakia to the West in several waves since 1938, there exists now a large potential readership for Czech and Slovak books. Thus the setting up of a purged Writers' Union in Prague was marked by the publication of two Czech novels abroad, launching two new publishing houses. 68 Publishers Toronto have issued Josef Škvorecký's *Tankový prapor* (The Tank Battalion), a hilarious satire on life in the People's Army in the early 1950s and a book twice banned in Czechoslovakia. The Cologne publishers Index have issued *Jelení brod* (The Deer Ford) by Jiří Hochman, a charming story of a village which has somehow remained outside the world since 1946, with obvious and delightful human and political implications. Hochman, a popular reformist journalist in 1968, still lives in Czechoslovakia in considerable hardship and agreed to the publication of his novel fully aware of the risks which this might involve.

Both publishing houses (and they are not the only ones) seem to be well stocked with manuscripts and have announced other books to follow the first two. 68 Publishers Toronto have been especially enterprising in this respect, for they have even unearthed a young and promising English-writing novelist of Czech origin in Canada, while Index are preparing to publish, among other things, a large sociological study on present conditions in Czechoslovakia written there and then exported.

It may be expected that this publishing activity will eventually slow down as the present generation of exiled writers succumb to the pressures of their new surroundings. It is encouraging, however, to notice that while in the past exiles from Central and Eastern Europe used to find their best prospects in opening delicatessens, nowadays they can do almost as well in literature and at universities.

* * *

The National Book League's ambitious sequence, under the general title "Word and Image", is divided into two pairs of related exhibitions. The first, displaying successively the work of Wyndham Lewis and Michael Ayrton, has just come to an end; the second part, which will deal with Mervyn Peake and David Jones, is to come next year. The whole series provides a fascinating insight on—well, not a trend in British art and letters, anything but a trend, since all four are quite clearly, instinctively and deliberately, removed from whatever one may suppose to be the going thing in art and literature. Is there perhaps, in the close involvement of visual and verbal ideas which is common to the work of all the four, a necessary detachment from the current artistic and literary fashion? The shade of William Blake is silently omnipresent. Neither Lewis nor Ayrton, both technically and imaginatively competent as artists in several media and as writers, is in the true sense an illustrator (as Peake and, to a lesser extent, Jones are), despite the intermingling of the same ideas, in words and visual images, in their work. If you go from the National Book League to the Tate Gallery's current exhibition of Blake's illustrations to Gray, you get a distinct shock. Blake, with his radical political and literary views, his capacity for inventing myths and giving them verbal and visual form, was like Lewis and Ayrton thus far; but he was also an illustrator as well, giving to words originally meant to stand on their own a visual image which sometimes reflects and sometimes transcends the verbal image.

Are there, in fact, two modes of interaction between word and image; the instinctive one in the mind of the polytalented artist, and the deliberate one in the adaptation of one to the other in the illustrator's approach to his author? And is the first in any sense superseding the second; or is the first now as always rare and apart, and the second declining for other reasons? Illustration, whether regarded as an art or a trade, is declining, and very rapidly: a victim of the camera, like miniature painting in the nineteenth century. It is no coincidence that two quite separate exhibitions have been put on in New York and Chicago recently with the common theme of "the author as illustrator". If one considers two such remarkable and different graphic talents as Victor Hugo and Thackeray, and reflects that both were perfectly prepared to work with the professional illustrators of the time, it makes one wonder how much we are losing with the disappearance of the illustrator. Both the American exhibitions put the small but piquant question, "What image was in the author's mind?" Is it time now to ask finally—in some vast retrospective exhibition perhaps—what relation between word and image the world expected from Classical times to 1950, before the two part for ever, only to be united in the minds of the rare few who can work simultaneously in both media?

Time will tell, but now the disappearance of the major link between imaginative words and imaginative pictures puts a new importance on the work of Lewis, Ayrton, Peake and Jones. The ability to work alike with words and images was a close bond between Lewis and Ayrton, and when Lewis went blind, this bond was strong enough for him to trust Ayrton to finish his drawing of Ezra Pound and do the bookjackets for his last writing. But in every other respect they could hardly be more different. Lewis, although, as T. G. Rosenthal rightly calls him in his introductory essay, "a key figure in English art and letters", was and remains an intensely irritating person. At his best—in, say, his portraits (of which there were not enough in the exhibition)—this irritation is sublime. Like Goya's sitters, Lewis's could only say: "Damn you, you're right." At his worst, as in some of his political writing, he is unbearable. But as an influence, as artist, as writer (surely *The Apes of God* is one of the masterpieces of the century), as critic, as, simply, a force that no one could ignore in art and letters—Lewis will be remembered.

Ayrton's is a quite different talent. Quieter (but not less violent), removed from the current scene into a mythological world of his own, he is, in every sense, a classic artist. Everything that he draws or writes is filled with the vision of the classical past which used to be such a dominant part of the writer's or artist's material, and is now, like the art of illustration, in danger of being forgotten. In Ayrton's case it is arcane, and yet like all good secrets it has an immense power to attract. Less successful than Lewis at attracting attention as a writer, Ayrton is a much more successful artist. Not a year passes without several exhibitions all over the world of his versatile images of a private world which, none the less, becomes larger and clearer with every manifestation. His talent is still growing and his vision is one that will be more and more widely admired.

For both these exhibitions, then, and for pointing the theme that connects them, the National Book League deserve praise. But the catalogue is another matter. Since each exhibition has been (and presumably will be) a major display of each of the author-artists' work, since further it is an ambitious and successful attempt to identify a particular combination of creative gifts at a time when all the arts are looking for a sense of direction—and when, therefore, an exhibition like this may turn out to be a signpost of more than temporary importance—the catalogue ought to match up both to the intention and to the potential influence it may have. One would expect a biographical essay of respectable proportions, a fair number of illustrations, perhaps a brief essay placing the work of the four in the setting of contemporary British arts and letters, and above all notes on the exhibits catalogued. There is none of this. Lewis and Ayrton share a catalogue, with a terse chronological table each, an agreeable but somewhat perfunctory piece by T. G. Rosenthal, a handful of pictures, and, worst of all, with the catalogue entries restricted to the barest details of size, medium, date of publication and lender—hardly enough even to recognize them again. This, such as it is, is laid out in a tired "modern" typographic design, rather as if it were the selling catalogue of a rather posh modern art gallery. It is poorly produced and, to add insult to injury, it costs no less than £1.75. It is always sad when a good exhibition has a bad catalogue, but to offer this as a memorial of a series of exhibitions with such pretensions will simply not do.

Anti-German aniseed balls

R. STUART MACRAE:
Winston Churchill's Toyshop
228pp. Kineton: The Roundwood Press. £2.75.

According to Stuart Macrae, the first of the toys to be produced by Winston Churchill's Toyshop, and one of the most successful, was the Limpet. This was a hemispherical mine which a swimming saboteur could fix to the side of a ship with the help of magnets set round its rim to be exploded at a chosen interval by means of a delay-action fuse. The last to which Colonel Macrae refers was an anti-personnel bomb, to be dropped from aircraft, which could be guaranteed to explode at the most effective height by being made to bounce off the ground by one fuse and to be detonated twenty feet up by another. A delay-action switch could be fitted to this also, to render a whole area dangerous for a predetermined period.

Colonel Macrae has obviously a great gift for designing delay mechanisms, and in *Winston Churchill's Toyshop* he describes very clearly the workings of a number of these ingenious toys. He appears to have fitted himself with one as well, which has allowed a quarter of a century to elapse before the production of this account of the research and production department in which he worked throughout the Second World War, under the direction of Lord Cherwell. Officially it was known as MD1, to show it came directly under the Ministry of Defence; the mocking nickname its rivals gave it he has been proud to adopt as his title.

The originator of the department was a typical mad sapper, but with an MC and a gift for higher mathematics, who began the war as a Major and ended as Major-General Sir Millis Jefferis. Colonel Macrae, in June, 1939, was a civilian and editor of *Armchair Science*. They came together because he had published an article on magnets, and Jefferis wanted to know all about them to find out how to anchor his Limpets. They remained together to the end. Jefferis was an inventive genius, and Macrae, as his second-in-command, was an outstanding organizer. He was a first-class engineer as well, with plenty of bright ideas; in fact he produced the prototype of the Limpet.

Gradually the organization grew. It remained independent in spite of all attempts to absorb it into the Ministry of Supply, mainly by a piece of luck: between them the two designed and put into production the "fluvial mine" on which Churchill had set his heart for the operation "Royal Marine", intended to destroy shipping on the Rhine. Because of this Churchill continued to give them his protection throughout the war, and entrusted them to the care of Lord Cherwell to keep away such would-be predators as Lord Beaverbrook and the Chief Inspector of Armaments.

The Sticky Bomb, the Blacker Bombard, and the Projector Infantry Anti-Tank, or Piat, are names which bring back days of heroic struggle. The Blacker Bombard was intended as the Home Guard's anti-tank weapon; the Piat was used on various fronts and earned many VCs.

Their evolution is breezily described. This is in fact a hilarious book and certain to amuse even those whose interest in weapons of war is minimal. "I think I can safely claim", says Colonel Macrae, "to be the first man to drill holes in aniseed balls and to devise a fitting to enable this to be done accurately and efficiently". The reason why he was so oddly employed was that an aniseed ball, thanks to the makers' methodical method of production, is a precision job and provided a delaying pellet for the Limpet whose time of dissolving could be accurately ascertained. (Later on, when Colonel Macrae had developed a refined delay switch based on the creeping properties of lead, this was used in the Mark II Limpet, but it showed no appreciable improvement in functioning.) He is equally entertaining when describing how he demonstrated his devices to Churchill.

The department had a remarkable record both in invention and production. It did plenty of less spectacular but valuable work too in making switches for booby-traps and demolition. No doubt because of his training in journalism, Colonel Macrae has been able to tell his story in a thoroughly engaging manner. Equally engaging is his tribute to Lord Cherwell. He admits the faults of which his enemies have made so much but testifies to his robust common sense, his moderation in the use of the powers delegated to him by Churchill, and his generosity to those who worked for him.

An American Presence

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A self-revealing poet

STEPHEN SPENDER:
The Generous Days
48pp. Faber and Faber. £1.

"Redeeming the world by introspection": Louis MacNeice's phrase (from his autobiographical sketch, *The Strings are False*) about Stephen Spender in the late 1920s could serve as an epigraph to the whole body of Spender's poetic work as well. Indeed, it makes much better sense to look at the poems in this way, as attempts at redemptive and quasi-religious self-searching, than it ever did to see them as coming primarily from social or political concerns. Express trains, pylons, the unemployed at street corners, the burning of the Reichstag or the Spanish Civil War—all were merely grit for Spender's insatiably self-regarding oyster. But for some years the question has been about the quality of the pearls produced.

The strikingly handsome and wayward poet who emerged at Oxford has become legendary, in such memoirs as Christopher Isherwood's *Lions and Shadows*, Arthur Calder-Marshall's *The Magic of My Youth*, MacNeice's book already mentioned, and not least in Spender's own autobiography, *World Within World*—arguably his best book. This is the perpetual "young poet", "the Rupert Brooke of the Depression" as Norman Cameron wittily characterized him. What all his memorialists, including Spender himself, settle on, apart from his appearance ("a towering angel not sure if he was fallen", "a great scarlet poppy-face, wild frizzy hair, and eyes the violent colour of bluebells"), is his intense, dramatic, often embarrassing self-absorption, tormented, blundering, confessional to the point of absurdity: "the most rapidly self-revealing person I had ever met", as John Lehmann put it. One gets an impression of some sort of holy fool.

Yet the early poems both support and belie this. "My parents kept me from children who were rough" incurred the scorn of a Thom Gunn poem which appeared to see such a statement as a sign of incorrigible softness and weakness. It is true that weakness, impotence, the incapacity to act—and, as a consequence, pity—are all themes in Spender's first book. But they are handled with an instinctive firm skill, a sureness of cadence that is entirely individual:

What I expected was
Thunder, fighting,
Long struggles with men
And climbing.
After continual straining
I should grow strong;
Then the rocks would shake
And I should rest long . . .

He will watch the hawk with an indifferent eye
Or pitifully;
Nor on those eagles that so feared him, now
Will strain his brow;
Weapons men use, stone, sling and strong-thewed bow
He will not know.
This aristocrat, superb of all instinct,
With death close linked
Had paced the enormous cloud, almost had won
War on the sun;
Till now, like Icarus mid-ocean-drowned,
Hands, wings, are found.

Admiration for the force and achievement of the perfected will, and for the hero figure who personifies that will, is tempered by equally romantic notions of the inevitability of failure, death, darkness: "And all those other 'I's' who long for 'We dying'." The first-person of these early poems—and they are very much poems of the first-person—seems to be an amalgam of the majestic arch-creator Beethoven ("What else is iron but he?") and the slobbering scapegoat, Van Der Lubbe ("I laugh because my laughter/Is like justice, twisted by a howitzer"). The frequent images of the imprisoned self, painfully trying to communicate through vulnerable senses its need to love and be loved, suggests something almost autistic, certainly solipsist. They seem the last gasp of the stricken deer, the wounded romantic artist.

These early Spender poems are demonstrations of a critical distinction he made much later, in the Berkeley lectures in the late 1950s which became *The Struggle of the Modern*, between "moderns" and "contemporaries". The moderns explore and are dynamic, trying to make broad relations between fragmented areas of life; the contemporaries document, analyse, but are essentially static rather than dynamic. Spender is very much a modern, sometimes yoking together disparates so violently that he becomes absurd:

When we touched hands
I felt the whole rebel, feared mutiny
And turned away,
Thinking, if these were tricklings through a dam,
I must have love enough to run a factory on,
Or give a city power, or drive a train.

(One feels, perhaps unfairly, that it was mere chance that prevented Spender from being drawn by the chime into making that last word "tram", which would have pushed the absurdity even further.) Yet it is the dynamism, the nervous energy and dangerously pent-up force of the early poems, that give them their peculiar distinction. MacNeice's documentation is sharper, Auden's analysis is far more intelligent, but as an explorer of the psyche Spender is beyond them both. He is Isherwood's "truly weak man", and his weakness liberates him.

But to be "most remarkable for weakness" requires an effort against distractions if the "modern" poet is not to become as static as the "contemporaries"; and in this began Spender's decline as a poet. In *World Within World* he has described with startling honesty his rapid fame and what it did to him. He knew the attractions of being a public figure; himself the product of a political and public family, he knew the dangers, too. The poem from which he took the epigraph to *World Within World* catches him at the point of balance:

To break out of the chaos of my darkness
Into a lucid day, is all my will.
My words like eyes through night, strain to seek
Some centre for their light; and acts that throw me
To distant places through impatient violence
Yet join together, to curve a path of stone
Out of my darkness into a lucid day.

Yet, equally, to avoid that lucid day
And to conserve that darkness, is all my will.
My words like eyes that flinch from light, avoid
The light, and seek their night; my acts
Cast to their opposites by impatient violence
Shatter the sequent path. They move
On a circumference to avoid the centre. . . .

And in the autobiography itself there is a passage about himself and his attitude to his work at this time (when he was living in Germany) which one must quote in full:

At this time my prevalent social attitude was one of pity. This, and sympathy with weakness, showed in my work and behaviour. These were attitudes of what Yeats calls "passive suffering". They were the projections of a mixture of strength and weakness: strength, to the extent to which I was master of my own kingdom of the creative imagination, my own work wherein I might create as I chose. Within this inner world even weakness could become a kind of strength. It isolated me and disqualified me from other kinds of work than poetic writing. I needed only the strength of my own weakness to say that I had no other responsibilities than simply to exist in order to write. It enlarged my sympathies by leading me down paths where people were insulted, oppressed, or vicious. It saved me from having to judge them by conventional rules of conduct, since I did not observe these myself.

That a poet's sole raison d'être can be the exploration of his own inner perspectives was no new idea; but the times in which Spender lived and the pressures of his own public self gradually forced him to make compromises with what was essentially a nineteenth-century Romantic stance. His experience of the Spanish Civil War, his membership of the Communist Party, his readiness to be a literary and journalistic pundit, stirred up cross-currents of feelings which sapped more than they invigorated:

Circumstances combined to make me attach too much importance to my opinions. For my views as critic, as journalistic observer, and as amateur politician, were all in demand. . . . I found that my own views, however strongly held, bored me as soon as they were uttered. I realized that they concerned things which other people could express better, or that they arose out of the irritation of the moment, like an angry telegram. The effect of publishing too many opinions was like an inflation of the currency of my reputation not only before others but—which was more serious—to myself.

The poems Spender wrote as a result of his experiences during the Spanish Civil War are almost the last in which he managed, perhaps almost unknowingly, to fuse his own "passive sufferings" successfully with those of others: his own emotional involvement at a thoroughly personal level (gone into with naked frankness in *World Within World*), together with his recoil from the waste of the only war he had seen at first-hand, combined to give the impetus to many of the poems in *The Still Centre* (1939): "Ultima Ratio Regum", "Two Armies", "The Room Above the Square", "A Stopwatch and an Ordnance Map". In all these poems the objective correlative was utterly unsatisfactory from any partisan political point of view—they must, indeed, have been an embarrassment to any loyal Communist—yet they create their own authentic world, verify it, and add to the sum of experience rather than simply notating or qualifying it.

This was not to happen much during the years of the Second World War. "Passive suffering" continued, but there seemed to be no personal insight to cope with it: only the decorative, Edith Sitwellian plangencies of "Air Raid Across the Bay" ("In the fields the corn/Sways, with metallic clicks./Man hammers nails in Man,/High on his crucifix") or the sub-Hardy of "June 1940" ("Twinned with our lives was our doom/Our killer at our birth, from the same womb"). The tone became more uncertain, the language more eclectic and more diffuse. The self-centredness which had seemed so transparent and winsome at twenty now looked merely gauche at thirty-five, in those immediately postwar poems in memory of Margaret Spender:

Of what use is my weeping?
It does not carry a surgeon's knife
To cut the wrongly-multiplying cells
At the root of your life.
All it can prove
Is that extremities of love
Reach the Arctic Pole of the white bone
Where panic fills the night in which we are alone

Now even private grief seemed muddied and inflated by a public self who was no longer simply critic, journalistic observer and amateur politician but an international figure, *conferencier* in chief, and soon to be founding editor of an international politico-literary periodical, *Encounter*. When Spender's *Collected Poems* appeared in 1955, Edwin Muir's comment that "section ten, which contains his latest poetry, contains also his best" had the smell of hopeful generosity rather than well-judged insight.

Apart from the handful of new work towards the end of the *Collected Poems*, Spender's most recent book of verse until the other day was *The Edge of Being* (1949). *The Generous Days* therefore draws, potentially, on the products of more than twenty years. But it is a slim offering for such a time span.

Some of the poems look like reworkings of old ones, perhaps products of a wartime notebook; others are marginal notes, either variations on someone else's themes (such as the "Four Sketches for Herbert Read") or—like "Bagatelles"—half-hearted epigrams or memorabilia; and there is the persistent feeling of poems being grubbed up from "occasions", such as "Central Heating System", which, with an uneasy mixture of imagism and expressionism, attempts to memorialize what was evidently a long night of the soul spent in Storrs, Connecticut. The most direct is a hasty character-sketch called "Art Student", clumsily and rawly done, but the clumsiness and rawness might be justified by arguing that, after all, they embody what the poem is about. For the rest, there are some wan and rather abstract love poems, and a title-poem which speaks with a formal rhetoric unfamiliar in Spender and very difficult to follow:

Body soul—soul body—are his breath;
—Or light or shadow cast before his will
In these, his generous days. They prove
His utmost being simply is to give,
Wholly to die, or wholly, else, to live!
If the cause ask for death then let it kill.
If the blood ask for life, then let it love,
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One feels that a text is being offered here, if one could only grasp it: the concept of giving, of generosity, has always been a strong one in Spender (perhaps in some odd way his own surname has had something to do with that), and yet constantly playing against it has been the deeply self-centred, ungiving, unsharing impulse from which his best poems seem to have sprung. The search for unity, for fulfilment of the self in the selves of others, meets its obdurate barriers, is diverted, and leaks away:

Beholders of the promised dawn of truth
The explorers of immense and simple lines,
Here is our goal, men cried, but it was lost
Amongst the mountain mists and mountain pines.
So with this face of love, whose breathings are
A mystery shadowed on the desert floor:
The promise hangs, this swarm of stars and flowers,
And then there comes the shutting of a door.

The dangerous vagueness of this early poem is circumvented by the pressure of assurance sensed behind the words and the cadences: what G. S. Fraser once neatly characterized as Spender's "stumbling eloquence" steers it through the clichés of promised dawns and mountains, the ready-made images of stars and flowers, towards the flatness, bareness and mysteriousness of "the shutting of a door". It is this quality of painful inward search, of obsessive but momentarily lightened self-questioning, which is missing from the poems in *The Generous Days*. The introspection is still there, but it redeems nothing: it seems fitful, distracted, a mood of perfunctory force, observing little, remembering less.

Towards the end of *World Within World*, at a point where he is making a series of alternative summaries of what his life has shown him, Spender writes:

Strictly speaking, one never *is*, one is only moving. The ideal is the conception of a goal shared by others which unites separately existing individuals within shared values. The goal is the highest conception of the group towards which the individual, from his separate moment, moves. It is the tension between past acceptance and future endeavour, between the isolated individual and the community, between material and form, which is the impulse, the direction, the movement, the closest approximation towards what really *is*.

This is cloudily seen and expressed, but it indicates the tension which has always undenpinned Spender's work, at its best giving purely personal impulses a firmer stamp and wider currency, at its worst being inert and lacking substance but at least escaping the gnomic arrogance of bad Auden, the urbane superciliousness of bad MacNeice, or the moral fatuity of bad Day Lewis. Self-knowledge, Spender says, can never be a goal, because the self never stays still; and yet Spender's best poems are those in which, momentarily, apparently unwilled, almost in a state of trance, his self suddenly swims into focus and is caught. At these moments, paradoxically, he has spoken most clearly of himself and of others; but they have been rare moments. In a poem in *The Generous Days*, he remembers "Three undergraduates standing talking in / A college quad"—MacNeice, Bernard Spencer and himself:

Their lives are now those poems that were
Pointers to the poems to be their lives.
We read there in the college quad. Each poem
Is still a new beginning. If
They had been finished though they would have died
Before they died. Being alive
Is when each moment's a new start, with past
And future shuffled between fingers
For a new game.
I'm dealing out
My hand to them, one more now botched beginning.
Here, where we still stand talking in the quad.

It is a poignant moment in an otherwise largely unsatisfactory book: the young man among other young men—two of them now dead—poised on the brink of a world which they did not, and could not, redeem.

To the Editor

'The Waste Land'

Sir,—I am astonished that Peter du Sautoy (December 17) found my review of *The Waste Land* (December 10) offensive. No offence was intended. I take his points in turn:

(1) One has relations with a person whom one knows only through letters. Eliot's letters to Quinn, as excerpted by Mrs Eliot, make the relationship seem very one-sided. One hoped there might be others which would better convey Eliot's sense of Quinn as a human being, not just as a benefactor.

(2) It is news to me that the phrase "one understands" is disparaging. It signified merely that I had heard of the memorandum attached to Eliot's will but had not seen it. What is offensive about that?

(3) I am glad to know that a full-scale biography of Eliot may be hoped for, also a full collection of letters. One hopes that everyone concerned knows the difference between biography and hagiography. My review made quite clear the "secret" (Mr du Sautoy's word) which I should like to have revealed—it was, and is, the nature of the maladies from which both T. S. Eliot and Vivien Eliot were suffering while *The Waste Land* was being written. To raise an unlikely possibility, it would certainly be relevant to our understanding of *The Waste Land* to know if its author had ever experienced hallucination.

(4) It is *not* clear from the facsimile that Pound asked Eliot to suppress his couplets. On the contrary, Pound's annotations against particular lines and couplets suggest that at one stage he thought the passage as a whole might or should be salvaged.

(5) I concede that "laboured", as applied to Eliot's imitation of *The Rape of the Lock*, is my word, not Mrs Eliot's.

(6) Nothing "lies behind" my assertion (not "implication") that "Eliot's poetry gives offence to many people". I mentioned explicitly the allegation that Eliot was an antisemite. If Mr du Sautoy cares to read the volume which I specified, *Eliot in Perspective*, he will find evidence of readers taking offence at this feature of Eliot's writings as well as at other features.

(7) Since I pleaded in the review for an end to the whispers and tittle-tattle that circulate about Eliot (not only, or mainly, about his attitudes to sex), I certainly shall not tattle them into print, as Mr du Sautoy wants me to do.

(8) My review explicitly expressed sympathy for Valerie Eliot's difficulties. In large part these are difficulties inevitable when one is the widow of a famous writer. The suggestion that she should "provide details of her husband's sexual life" is obscene; it is the product of Mr du Sautoy's heated imagination—I would not, and did not, suggest any such thing. I trust Valerie Eliot can distinguish Art from Life as Mr du Sautoy cannot.

No one would imagine, reading Mr du Sautoy's letter, that a main part of my review was to defend Eliot against the offensive opinion of other reviewers that he did not know what he was doing in *The Waste Land* until Ezra Pound showed him. I deeply resent Mr du Sautoy's insinuation that I would have written differently if my review had been signed.

YOUR REVIEWER.

AUDIENCES & SALAD DRESSING

The Financial Times critic, reviewing 'Waiting for Godot', said that Peter Bull looked like 'a vast obscene baby'. Mr. Bull repeats the description without apparent rancour in 'Heard in the Wings'*, an anthology of humorous and ruminative pieces by a variety of Thespians. It is indication, as are other of the articles, of the really appalling personal criticisms to which actors are subjected. It is therefore pleasing to see the shortcomings of audiences exposed from the other side of the footlights.

Sir Ralph Richardson writes of a Sea Lord who congratulated the projectionist (mistaking him for the film's producer), while Robert Morley compares audiences to salad dressings ('never the same twice running') and Harry Secombe recalls a pantomime audience shouting 'It's a man dressed up' when his wig fell off. It is always interesting to look behind the public face of public figures—even when the revelations are so light-heartedly conducted. All the more so in the case of actors—men and women whose livelihood depends on concealing their identity in the name of art.

Taurus

* Edited by Roderick Bloomfield/£1.40/Stanley Paul

Sir,—Unlike Peter du Sautoy (December 17), I do not object to the anonymity of your reviews of the two recent books on T. S. Eliot (December 10) because anonymity has always been observed by *The Times Literary Supplement*. I do, however, object to certain misrepresentations in your review of Robert Sencourt's *T. S. Eliot: A Memoir*.

The closeness of the friendship between Eliot and Sencourt is a fact which your reviewer apparently finds it hard to accept. Because Eliot is one of the major literary figures of the twentieth century and Sencourt is now virtually unknown, this does not mean that there was no deep bond of sympathy between them in the years immediately following their first meeting. (About that time, incidentally, Sencourt was a contributor to *The Times Literary Supplement*; he wrote, for example, the leading articles of April 15, 1926, April 14, 1927, and April 17, 1930, and even reviewed Eliot in your columns.) Not content with suggesting that their friendship was less close than Sencourt affirms, your reviewer even distorts the business arrangements between them. If he had carefully read page 142 of *T. S. Eliot: A Memoir*, he would have seen that Eliot accepted Sencourt's *Winston Churchill* in 1940 for publication by Faber and Faber.

If he had pursued his investigations a little further, he would have seen that Eliot also accepted *King Alfonso* from Robert Sencourt (published too by Faber and Faber in 1942). Why, then, does your reviewer write that "Eliot commissioned several *Criterion* book reviews from him and printed one or two of his articles", without mentioning the books? Not until T. S. Eliot's correspondence is published can we expect fuller proof of the closeness of his and Sencourt's friendship.

Sencourt did not claim to have been solely, or even primarily, responsible for Eliot's conversion to Anglicanism. On the contrary, he emphasizes (page 65) that this was a process dating back to at least 1917. In *A Sermon Preached in Magdalene College Chapel*, Eliot states quite plainly that any attempt to convert him would have failed (page 111). On the other hand, Sencourt did introduce the poet both to Lord Halifax and to Francis Underhill, and it is a fact that Eliot's baptism took place shortly after the meeting with Sencourt.

It is indeed a remarkable literary situation when reviewers review other reviewers' opinions of a book—as is now happening widely to *T. S. Eliot: A Memoir* following Stephen Spender's violent and curious review of it in *The Observer*. It is therefore worth emphasizing once again that there was a memorandum attached to T. S. Eliot's will, though not proved with it, requesting his co-executors (Mrs Valerie Eliot and Mr Peter du Sautoy) not "to facilitate or countenance the writing of any biography of me". Your readers might like to note that Eliot did *not* express a general desire that no one should contemplate writing a biography or memoir of him (he could have settled with his executors privately anyway), and why was his wish, which could not have been a sudden one, not incorporated into the will itself?

We now, however, have the fact of the book, and my decision to publish it was based on two considerations. Firstly, I believe that great poetry is in the public domain, and that to understand it fully we must know the man and all his intricacies. Secondly, I think that Robert Sencourt's memoir does indeed have value. It helps us to understand Vivien's influence upon Eliot, both as a man and a writer, and it provides invaluable insight into the poet's religious life. Incidentally, it also makes possible an authorized biography (and here I agree with Mr du Sautoy that such a book is necessary), and although John Hayward is now seen to be unreliable in his accounts of Eliot's leave-taking and the financial arrangements concerning their flat, the ultimate biography will, for instance, benefit from Mrs Valerie Eliot's notes made at the time. The opposition of Mrs Eliot to the late Robert Sencourt's book should be noted in the context of her unique position as Eliot's widow and the custodian of his papers.

It is a fact, however unpalatable to some of T. S. Eliot's friends, that Eliot and Sencourt shared a deep interest in the need for spiritual grace. Lord Fisher of Lambeth has testified to the inner spirituality of a man who does not deserve the sharp attacks he has recently had to suffer. In December, 1956, for instance, Eliot wrote a most friendly letter to Sencourt which opened with the words "My dear Robert . . .", asking him to telephone his secretary to arrange a visit and ending, "I hope I shall see you one way or the other. Ever affectionately, Tom".

Dr Donald Adamson, the editor of *T. S. Eliot: A Memoir*, and I have both received letters praising his restraint in handling difficult material; your reviewer of *The Waste Land* clearly feels there is now a need for fuller biographical information. So do I. "In any situation, look to the facts": such was Bertrand Russell's valedictory message in a ninetieth birthday television interview; surely this is equally applicable to T. S. Eliot's life?

MICHAEL BALFOUR.

Garnstone Press, 59 Brompton Road, London, SW3 1DS.

Sir,—Living where I do at the moment, I only recently received the *TLS* of December 10. I hope that, in spite of the time elapsed, you might allow me to comment briefly on the concluding remarks of your review of *The Waste Land*.

We live in an age of cult of the personality and love of scandal, an age in which biographical curiosity far outweighs the curiosity about the works themselves. In spite of Proust, owing to the growth of psychoanalysis and the mass media, Sainte-Beuve's love of biographical details and his approach to the works through biography have triumphed.

Your reviewer asks: "What was wrong with Eliot that took him to a clinic in Lausanne?" He had a nervous breakdown. Millions of people have nervous breakdowns for the most complex of reasons which can no more be reduced to a simple matter of causes and effects than such states can be made the basis of creativeness. Breakdowns, broken love affairs do not produce poetry unless the protagonists are poets. Millions of men love and suffer betrayals, but one has to be a Shakespeare, Vigny, Meredith or a Yeats—i e, a poet—to turn these experiences into poetry. And these experiences are no more explanations of the poem than a piece of scenery or a model is the explanation of a painting. They are merely starting-points, the itch that starts the pearl in the oyster, but in order to produce a pearl there must be an oyster.

Eliot shared this belief, and that is why he did not wish to have his work explained or replaced by his biography. Yet, this very rational belief in the dissociation of the life of the writer from the work, shared by various poets, seems to lead, in the case of Eliot, to all kinds of suppositions and to your reviewer's question: "What is there to hide? Whatever it is, it cannot be worse than what is commonly alleged in whispers."

Having known and seen Eliot regularly and continuously for the last twenty-five years of his life, until I took leave of him on his death-bed, I think I can claim a close and affectionate relationship with him and therefore the possibility of suggesting some reasonable answers to points raised by your review or conjured up by the alleged whispers. The question is raised as to whether Eliot might not have been a sponger upon his friends. This is basically unfair. Eliot in his early life was helped by his friends who believed in him, as was also the case with Edwin Muir, Paul Valéry, Stendhal, and many others. I can state, and if necessary I could easily produce written proof, that Eliot was an extremely generous and kind man, ready to help concretely anyone in need.

He was neither anti-sex nor anti-woman; but what else but disgust and fear about love and sex could one have when the high dreams of love have turned to bitterness? Can a normal imagination fail to understand the fact that it is difficult, if not abhorrent, to contemplate sexual and physical relations with a woman with whom love has been replaced by a total incomprehension and terror?

The notion of homosexuality is, I suppose, the root cause of the "whispers", and this is surely absolute nonsense. Eliot was a very affectionate man, yet not given to carrying his heart on his sleeve, but extremely keen to love human beings if he could reach the certainty that his love would be altruistically returned. He showed his need for love and his capacity to love when he met his second wife. Being simple at heart, he was very wary of adulation and sycophancy, and he hated gossip, literary or otherwise. Robert Sencourt came to see me three times when I lived in Southampton, and he was among those who were and perhaps still are obsessed with the notion of homosexuality. I told him repeatedly that such a notion was, as far as Eliot was concerned, completely absurd, and he did not, indeed, make any such suggestion in his book. Having had endless conversations with Eliot on all aspects of human life and thought, I can certainly be categorical on this point.

Robert Sencourt, who according to his own admission had not seen Eliot for a while, was when I met him most concerned with gossip than with literature or serious research. Whatever his relations with the youthful Eliot may have been, they certainly implied neither meeting of minds nor true reality in their adult life.

I hope that these few remarks will help to dispose of suppositions and whispers, and prompt concentration on what truly matters, which is the outstanding poetry of a great human being.

J. CHIARI.

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'Conflict in the Middle East'

Sir,—After twenty years in the academic profession one becomes accustomed to critical reviews of one's writings. Personally hostile reviews, however, are another matter. Instead of reviewing my book, *Conflict in the Middle East* (December 17), your reviewer chose to communicate to your readers his presumptions about my origins and past status in the Middle East, as well as his objection to my current professional and personal associations. In his hurry to identify me as a member of an underprivileged minority, he forgot the actual task you engaged him to do.

My purpose in surveying the recent political history of certain Middle Eastern states was to explore one of several alternatives to the study of conflict in them. It would be interesting to have your reviewer's reaction to my chosen approach. Does he, for example, think that the patterns of conflict I suggest bear any relation to events as they occurred? For all one knows, your reviewer may be unhappy because events did not occur in the way he wished them to. But that is his problem. Where he can also show that my analysis and general assessment of the political performance of the Arab states, especially in the years 1945 to 1967, is removed from reality as this is perceived by the Arabs themselves and most serious students of their history, I invite him to do so. The difficulty however with this level of dialogue arises when, in present circumstances, it also attracts the shrill opinions of lobbyists, publicists and purveyors of the various causes of Middle Easterners in Great Britain.

Your reviewer finds my association with Professor E. Kedourie a disqualification from studying the politics of the Middle East. He cites in evidence the annotated reference in my bibliography to Professor Kedourie's works on the political evolution of the Middle East as "original and provocative". Does he disagree with this annotation, or does he disapprove of Professor Kedourie himself? I wonder what he thinks of complimentary references to the works of several other colleagues in my bibliography.

Not to be ideological these days is unfashionable. To publish unpalatable truths and views about so emotionally charged and strife-ridden a corner of the world as the Middle East is nothing less, in the view of self-indulgent ideologues, than a mortal sin. Yet to evade the description and discussion of [the] realities of political life and experience [is a] more serious failing. For [ac]ademics, it is inexcusable. The ones [to] suffer in the end are the Middle [Ea]sterners themselves. No wonder [tha]t more Middle Easterners agree [wi]th the reality of their political con[dit]ion which I have described; and this [pa]rticularly the case if their pub[lic] writings of the last decade are [an] indication.

To review a book is to comment [on]ly on its contents and style; not [in]correct epithets for its author. Surely [the] TLS rejects the latter practice.

P. J. VATIKIOTIS.

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Our reviewer writes:—May I [po]int out that (1) My tactless remarks [concern]ing the two professors occupied less [than] 100 out of 800 words. The rest [was devot]ed to "comment critically on con[tent]s and style", nor did I "forget the [task] you engaged me for".

(2) I did not object—why should I?—to Professor Vatikiotis's associations [or] consider them a disqualification". [I mer]ely pointed to (a) his bibliography, [whic]h describes Professor Kedourie's [wor]ks and them alone as essential reading; (b) a common feature in the backgrounds of the two scholars; and (c) [a re]semblance in their outlook.

(3) I cannot regard history, certainly contemporary history, which does [no]t deal in incontrovertible facts or [me]asurable quantities, as an objective [scien]ce. It is bound to contain a subjective element, the point of view, influenced by the historian's personality, and [thi]s in turn is influenced by his background, formative years.

(4) My remarks therefore were so far [in]tended as a simple *constatation*, and [di]d not contain any "concocted [epithe]ts".

(5) I did however question specific [point]s of fact, as Professor Vatikiotis [pu]ts them—that after 1957 President Nasser's policy included the destruction of Israel (page 131) and that [the] passage of the UN Partition resolution was due to Arab failure to "convince the world of the justice of their [cause]" (page 136). The first would, I [thin]k, be denied by most, if not all, [Wester]n observers with personal knowledge of the late President; as for the [secon]d it is surely beyond doubt that [UN m]embers' views on the Palestine [issue] itself did not determine the vote, [wh]ich was decisively influenced by the threats, promises and manoeuvres of one power—the United States.

(6) Professor Vatikiotis asks me, as if I had declined them before, for my reactions to his approach. If I may briefly restate them, (a) I have already (in the opening paragraph of my review) tried to summarize his findings, from which, as far as they go, I only dissented on one lesser point; (b) I do however regard his approach as too exclusively political, hardly attempting to assess the economic and social consequences of the regimes examined: yet, after all, this—the welfare of the people concerned—is what matters most in "assessing the political performance" of a state; (c) a study of *Conflict in the Middle East* gives an incorrect picture of this region without some attention to areas of comparative harmony: Professor Vatikiotis, like a newspaper, unlike a sundial, records mainly shadow—for example, the relative harmony with which Kuwait has developed her administration and external relations is unmentioned, while the conflicts of the less important Lower Gulf are extensively covered; and (d) Professor Vatikiotis is not immune from the tendency, which I like to think of as less prevalent here than in America, to treat political phenomena as if they were biological or chemical ones, subject to natural laws and susceptible of classification: and to forget that every independent government, like every living person, is unique.

Asturias

Sir,—Had the insufferably patronizing reviewer of Miguel Angel Asturias's *Green Pope* (November 19) managed to struggle on beyond page 2 of this curious and interesting novel he would have found himself faced, on page 43, with the following rather clear indication that the text he was dealing with does not provide a solid basis for a discussion of the merits or demerits of this writer's use of language: "What a pleasure to feel one's self pursued by a rider who was advancing with great trots ready to break into a gallop." The words "with great trots" represent the translator's nice try for "a trote largo". The majority of the examples of Asturias's inept use of metaphor given by your reviewer are, in fact, examples of this kind of nicety.

I may add that reference to Asturias's texts does not support the view that he lost control of his medium and "returned to a strict Manichaeanism" between the writing of *El Señor Presidente* and *Viento Fuerte*. *El Señor Presidente* was brilliantly translated by Francis Partridge, and *Viento Fuerte* was put into a language of narcotic mediocrity by another hand. Your reviewer has evidently been too depressed by its unattractive surfaces to recognize that it is fully as rich in ambiguities as the earlier novel. In any case his plot summary wholly misses the point of the book. It does not "appear in the end that American capital can only be combatted with American capital" as he says. The idealistic American wife in this story goes out to seek her death in the hurricane that brings it to an end because she cannot bear to live with the realization that her liberalism is a luxury financed by the success of the capitalist enterprises whose methods she cannot endure; her husband, the millionaire-radical, goes out after her to his death because he cannot bear to live with her disillusionment, or with his self-contempt. The point, at least as I understood it, is that what the United States has done to Guatemala is as bad for itself as it is for the exploited country because it makes the myth by which its citizens live, that they are members of a moral or good society, as incredible to them as it is to their neighbours. Asturias is far from believing that Americans are "unredeemedly satanic" as a class, but he does appear to take the view that their society is sick and that its sickness makes them unhappy and self-destructive.

ANTHONY WEST.

186 East 75th Street, New York, NY 10021, USA.

Our reviewer writes:—Mr West's case for Asturias's language rests on the assumption that Gregory Rabassa's translation is misrepresented. Yet if he had taken a cursory look at the Spanish version of, say, page 43, he would have found many turns of phrase to delight an "insufferably patronizing reviewer". To take an example, we are told of Dona Flora, around whom the "angels of life" are "flying", that "El corazón la azotaba. Aparatos de telegramas llamado eran sus sienes". My point about the cyclone was that it seemed to be the only solution where all others had failed. Mr West doesn't suggest there is any other solution offered in the novel. Worse, he ignores the context in which my assumptions about the cyclone were made: that of a discussion on attitudes to nature in Latin American literature.

With regard to the subtle ambiguities Mr West finds in Asturias's work, I am reminded of a remark Borges once made about Güiraldes: "He was a very kind man. When he read my poems he seemed to be able to intuit what I might have written."

Klee's Nachlass

Sir,—Those of your readers who rely upon a review for some notion of a book's worth should be apprised of what they face in the second volume of Klee's pedagogical Nachlass, *Unendliche Naturgeschichte* (November 5). The serious criticism made of the first volume for its wilful fragmentation of Klee's sequence of thought within the dated lectures and the wholesale insertions into them of other Klee notes—all without indication—has evidently had little effect upon the second. The sense and continuity of the lectures is as disrupted here as it is in the first. Most of the interpolations—some of them pages long—have now been noted, but so vaguely that it is frequently impossible to determine where they begin or end. Even if your reviewer did not know the Nachlass at first hand, the confusion abetted by the notes was amply apparent in the book itself and should at least have been pointed out.

For the serious student, this volume of Klee's pedagogical writings is, unfortunately, scarcely more useful than the first; for the unwary, it is perhaps even more dangerous.

MARCEL FRANCISCONO.

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Our reviewer writes:—Jürg Spiller, who edited *Unendliche Naturgeschichte* from Paul Klee's manuscript notes, has prefaced the published edition with the statement: "Paul Klee's original texts and lectures have been set in large type on the outer side of each page. Quotations from other writings by Klee appear between inverted commas in smaller print on the inner margins, as do also certain comments by the editor" (translation by myself).

No intelligent reader who bears in mind this differentiation can confuse the three elements as printed. In fact, since Klee's handwritten lecture notes are highly compressed, they gain in publication through being intelligently elucidated. Nowhere do I see in this evidence of a "dangerous" betrayal of Paul Klee's thinking. Nor, I presume, do Felix Klee, his son, or the custodians of the Paul Klee-Stiftung, to which the original manuscripts belong, because the version as published appears with their full approval. Every "serious student" can find and read Klee's original notes in their continuity. But he can also find some necessary elucidations and illustrations.

James Elroy Flecker

Sir,—Referring to the notice in your issue of November 26 of certain unpublished literary remains of J. E. Flecker, some of your readers may be interested to know of the existence of another unpublished poem in lighter vein, the text of which appears below.

Castle Mirabel

My Lord Archbishop Salzburg,
He was a proud, proud man.
He could not turn his eyes away
From pretty girls:—Who can?
Their chins he chucked politely
(They seemed to like it well),
For Venus ruled and rightly
In Castle Mirabel—sing hey!
In Castle Mirabel!

My Lord Archbishop Salzburg,
He was a stern, stern man:
He used to bind sad heretics
And fry them in a pan
He'd leave them nicely stewing
And take a little spell
To cool his thirst for wooing
At Castle Mirabel—sing hey!
At Castle Mirabel!

My Lord Archbishop Salzburg—
Oh sorrow to befall!
Has left his virgin studies
For themes dogmatical.
They've ordered him assignment
Within a lonely cell;
Far better were confinement
In Castle Mirabel—sing hey!
In Castle Mirabel!

My Lord Archbishop Salzburg,
For sin you must atone.
A great Ecclesiastic
Should leave the girls alone.
For laymen is such pleasure:—
For heretics as well.
Why, I myself have treasure
In Castle Mirabel—sing hey!
In Castle Mirabel!

I do not suppose that Flecker is much read today, but he deserves to be remembered for the line "The dragon-green, the luminous, the dark, the serpent-haunted sea".

Flecker shares with C. S. Calverley the distinction of having been educated at both Oxford and Cambridge.

MARTIN SECKER.

Iver, Bucks.

Balancing the books for 1971

[In] 1971, for the first time in a dozen [y]ears, book output in Britain has [fal]len rather than risen; but be[fore] rejoicing breaks out even for a 3 [per] cent contraction of the book flood [th]e figures and the circumstances [mus]t be looked at. As recorded [in] the *Bookseller*, the year's total [show]s a drop compared with 1970 of [. . .] titles to a total of 32,538 new [boo]ks and new editions; but in fact [the n]umber of new books issued has [actua]lly risen slightly, to 23,563, an [incr]ease of fifty-one. The decrease [is en]tirely accounted for by a drop [of] 1,002, to a total of 8,975, in the [publ]ication of new editions and re[print]s, which in recent years have [forme]d a rising proportion of British [boo]k output.

And there are a few special fac[tors]. How much has the final total [bee]n affected by the postal strike [earl]y in the year? At the end of [Marc]h the total was 1,431 titles down [on] 1970, but by June the gap had [narr]owed to 882; and these largely [. . .]. By the end of the year new [work]s had more than recovered and [onl]y new editions, perhaps by design, [were] lagging. It may be that rising [prod]uction costs are making new edi[tions] less feasible.

[Agai]n, the basis of selection may [var]y slightly. This bibliography is [comp]iled by Whitakers chiefly for [the] benefit of booksellers and lib[rarie]s all over the world. Accord[ingly i]t includes only that proportion [of] the vast output of Her Majesty's [Stati]onery Office likely to interest [its] subscribers. In the past it has [bee]n as high as 1,200 titles, but [pres]ently includes no more than 800. [Add]ed to this is the fact that the [ration]alization in the past two years [of t]he annual collection may have [gone] to swell the size of the count, [and] the introduction of Standard [Book] Numbering may have encouraged marginal publishers (there are nearly 900 represented) to have their works recorded.

Moreover, when charges of over-production are levelled against British publishers, it must be borne in mind that the total includes about 28 per cent of new editions and reprints, and also several thousand titles which are not in fact British publications in origin but works imported, chiefly from the United States, in varying quantities, and recorded largely at the will of the importers because they are more or less regularly available. There is no accurate count of these, but they weigh heavily in the medical, scientific, technical and political categories. For example, no fewer than 2,541 titles under the heading of Political Science have been published this year, and 1,919 of these were new works: 8 per cent of all books issued here in 1971, and exceeded only by Fiction. In fact a large number of such works will certainly have been imported, many probably in small quantities.

Finally, when considering the size of British book output, it is worth noting that when a title is issued simultaneously in hardcover and paperback editions—a growing practice—this is counted as two works, while books issued in several volumes are recorded by the volume, provided that each may be bought separately.

Nevertheless the drop in titles issued this year may be significant, and the last real one since 1956, for a temporary reduction in 1959 was the result of a printing strike. Indeed there are signs now that purely British book publishing has been levelling off.

What is clear from the latest figures is that it is the "entertainment" categories that have been showing a drop. In 1971 only 2,134 new novels have been published, 186 fewer than last year and 252 less than in 1961, since when the total book output by title has risen by nearly one-third; and this year's new fiction total is actually 19 less than in 1937, generally regarded as the record prewar year, when total output amounted to 17,000 titles. This year fiction reprints, numbering 1,625, have dropped particularly sharply, with a reduction of 504 issues. Does this indicate that the paperback publishers, now the chief purveyors of reprint fiction, have been drawing in their horns? In any event the 1971 total for both new and reissued novels shows a drop of 16 per cent on the year, and is lower than any year since 1956. Not altogether a happy sign, reflecting perhaps the difficulty publishers have in selling novels by less known authors, particularly with public library book funds being squeezed.

The same is true of Children's Books, which had a boom in the early 1960s, partly occasioned by increased public and school library demand. Since then output has tended to decline, and this year's 1,553 new titles is to be compared with 2,270 in 1963, the record year. With reprints as well as new books back to the 1956 level, the Children's Book category, formerly second only to adult fiction, last year had to yield its place to Political Science and is now, with 2,001 titles, also lower than School Textbooks.

Literature, which includes criticism, literary history, and belles-lettres, has been the other class of book to show a marked drop in 1971: 1,100 titles compared with 1,320 a year ago. However this has been a very buoyant section in recent years. In 1964 only 668 works were recorded. And although Poetry has dropped by 89 to 731 new works and new editions, this merely cancels out a similar rise in 1970.

Against such falls, academic, scientific, and technical books, whether new works or new editions, continue to advance. Medical science, now the fifth largest class, shows a record total of 1,453; and chemistry and physics, registering the biggest rise of the year, tops the thousand mark for the first time, with a total of 1,001, including a jump of 210 new works up to 888. School textbooks, with the second biggest rise of the year, registered 2,040 (up 165), while law and administration also passed into the four-figure class for the first time with 1,026 (up 66). Other fast growers have been engineering at 1,132 (up 117) and commerce at 841 (up 82). Although history shows a drop of 103 down to 1,453, this has been almost entirely accounted for by reprints in one of the most expansive categories in the past decade.

One gap in these annual statistics is information about the number of paperbacks published. Admitting that somewhat arbitrary decisions may have to be taken over what constitutes a paperback, the growth of paperback publishing makes a separate count of value. From an unofficial recording made three years ago, it appeared that about 25 per cent of all works were issued in paperback form, and more than 25 per cent of these were novels. That their availability may be relatively short is indicated in the new edition of *Paperbacks in Print*, also published by Whitakers. This records 34,556 titles as currently available, whereas it is generally estimated that the total number of books in print in Britain is around 175,000.

If a forecast is to be made for the prospects for 1972, the trend is more likely to be down than up, but as will be seen from some of the factors mentioned above, the count is a complicated one. Meanwhile it is to be hoped that there will be an abatement of the not infrequent and always deploratory statement that "well over 30,000 new books are issued each year in Britain". There are surely enough without exaggerating the number.

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The lifelong scholar of Sligo

JAMES WHITE (Compiler):
Jack B. Yeats: Drawings and Paintings
158pp. £6.

The Collected Plays of Jack B. Yeats
Edited by Robin Skelton
382pp. £5.25.
Secker and Warburg.

The centenary of the birth of Jack B. Yeats has been celebrated this year by a representative exhibition of his work at the National Gallery of Ireland, a smaller show in New York, and the issue of a commemorative stamp by the Irish Government. James White, Director of the National Gallery, contributes a useful account of the artist's career, in conjunction with Hilary Pyle, who published a biography of Yeats last year. Jack Yeats was influenced, even more than his famous brother, by his early life in Co Sligo. He once declared: "Sligo was my school and the sky above it." And Mr White adds that whenever the wind turned to the west he felt a nostalgic longing for his boyhood. He had lived continuously from 1879 to 1887 with his grandparents, the Pollexfens, hearing eagerly much talk of the sea, of sailors, smuggling and pirates, for at that time Sligo was a small, but busy, seaport. When the Yeats family returned to London, Jack remained behind and attended a private school run by three spinsters, and was consistently at the bottom of the class. Soon the lad was making drawings, going to fair, circus and race-meeting.

When Jack Yeats went to London in the 1890s, he seems to have been completely uninfluenced by fashionable experiments in art, such as Impressionism, and developed quietly his own ability to draw and paint the one region which he loved and understood. Soon he was contributing drawings to periodicals ranging from *The Boy's Own Paper* to *Punch*, illustrating books, such as W. B. Yeats's *Irish Fairy Tales* (1892), and later the attractive Cuala private press series run by his sisters in Dublin. Although he took no part in politics, Jack Yeats remained a firm adherent of Republicanism, so much so that his relations with his elder brother in later years were strained.

In his early work, Jack Yeats sketched travelling players, seamen, tinkers and jockeys in a folklore tradition. "He had always a strong sense of man in relation to the impersonality of the Irish scene; isolated figures never dominate the landscape." Mr White fails to mention, however, the humour which is to be found in many of these sketches; for instance, "The Rake", proud of his dubious reputation, or "The Race Card Seller", with his sidelong look, watchful for a likely customer.

It was not until his return to Ireland in 1910 that Yeats turned finally to oil painting and began to experiment with plastic surfaces. In these paintings he expresses his own optimism, his joy of life, his distaste for war and horror. As Mr White points out, "the paint seems to liquefy on the canvas and to gleam incandescently with a quality of interior illumination", as in his picture "In Memory of Bianconi and Boucicault": this lyrical effect originates from his technique of manipulating paint direct from the tube and with a palette knife. Thus a feeling of immediacy is evoked. But such a method with modern paint is dangerous. The refulgent effects of Mancini's portraits of Lady Gregory and of other Irish writers, which are in the Municipal Gallery, Dublin, now lack all lustre. It is noteworthy, as Mr White points out, that in these paintings the figures hold a symbolic significance, "which increases their stature in the mind".

Less restrained than Mr White's comments are the tributes quoted here. Pierre Schneider writes:

> Barely emerging from the bitter liquid in which it bathes, dry sometimes on its rare summits, almost diluted everywhere else, with only the fleeting play of foam, fog and dew occasionally to blur the endless elemental contact: such is the Ireland that I imagine.

And here is Samuel Beckett:

> Gloss? In images of such breathless immediacy as these there is no occasion, no time given, no room left, for the lenitive of comment. None in this impetus of need that scatters them loose to the beyonds of vision. None in this great inner real where phantoms quick and dead, nature and void, all that ever and that never will be, join in a single evidence for a single testimony. None in this final mastery which submits in trembling to the unmasterable.

He adds: "Merely bow in wonder." Jack B. Yeats, in his dark studio, in Fitzwilliam Street, Dublin, would have been amused! There are 144 illustrations, including drawings, watercolours and paintings, and a detailed catalogue in *Jack B. Yeats: Drawings and Paintings*.

Robin Skelton, in a lengthly introduction to the *Collected Plays*, adds some interesting details in his account of the artist's career. When Jack Yeats was living in Devon with his wife, he developed an interest in Victorian theatrical prints and cut-out scenes and characters for such plays as *The Corsican Brothers*, *Paul Clifford the Highwayman*, *The Smuggler*. Soon he was writing his own playlets about pirates and smugglers, designing his own sets for them, which were shown to the children of the neighbourhood. Inevitably his plays soon passed beyond the mind of the young and were written to please himself, his friend John Masefield, and others. In *The Silencer*, for example, Hartigan, a practical joker, influences a group of businessmen and so dazzles them with his talk that they forget profits and prices, as they stumble bewildered through his fantasies. The lure of such poetic talk is shown in the random sentences of Nardock in *The Deathly Terrace*, another serious practical joker, who pretends death in order to give meaning and perspective to the lives of others:

> For a moment of every day or every age I hit upon the crust of the rainbow, and that is only a figure of speech for what I hit upon. . . . I whistled in the wind and it whistled back, an endless whistle, that had a colour and a form, a rope of whistling making and unmaking itself into knots nautical, and starry knots, a cable twisted of three, four, seven strands, and again it became a single strand like a whigging snake of blue light on a marble sea.

At the age of sixty, Jack Yeats began to write a remarkable series of plays and prose works, too original, too extreme in their fantastic peregrinations, to attract much interest. *Harlequin's Positions*, the first of his plays to be performed, is episodic, inconsequential, but slowed down in the third act by a great deal of philosophizing and wise comment. "Everything's symbolical if you look at it in the right way", exclaims one of the characters. Professor Skelton points out that the author's intention was

> not to interpret the symbolism he presented, but to offer it upon the stage in such a way that perfectly ordinary events appeared to be of more than usual significance. He dealt in hints, in nods, in sly suggestions.

Iala Noo, which was performed in 1942 at the Abbey Theatre when Yeats was seventy, is attractive in its implied symbolism and its oddness. Seven women, caught in a rainstorm, take shelter in a lonely country pub. The owner shows them an inner room, where they modestly strip off their clothes and hand them out for him to dry them at the nearby smithy. A stranger later agrees to drive them in his lorry to catch a bus, but he runs into a tree and is killed. The drama exists in the talk and its intimations of death. The last play, *In Sand*, was produced at the small Peacock Theatre in Dublin by Ria Mooney, who adapted it skilfully for stage production. It develops its own momentum and wayward form. The last wish of Anthony Lareson, a wealthy man, is that a young girl should write upon the sand at low tide the words: "Tony, we have the good thought for you still."

The message is written by a young girl, Alice, to whom Lareson has left an inheritance. On her travels she writes these words upon every strand she comes across. So at the end of the play, after her death, young people, faraway, are still writing the words on the sand, not understanding them, but knowing that they bring good luck.

Throughout these plays one follows the ever-varied metaphors and images which occupy the poet-artist in his rambles and reminiscences:

> Man is but a changing arrow of the sky, a turnspit on a tower, ever wavering, ever trying to catch the wind by running before it, ever spinning on a high heel. Mister-face-all-round with a knife, one moment nestling in a pigskin sheath and next in between some human ribs. So I sailed out of camp

Dream-ballads

JOHN ARDEN:
Two Autobiographical Plays
The True History of Squire Jonathan and his Unfortunate Treasure, and '*The Bagman*' or '*The Impromptu of Muswell Hill*'
88pp. Methuen. £1.20 (paperback, 45p).

Although described as "two autobiographical plays", this pair of dream-ballads is only loosely based on incidents in John Arden's everyday life. Squire Jonathan's treasure is unfortunate because it fails to seduce the "mountain of a white woman" who comes to his impregnable tower to thaw out after a fall from her horse, occasioned by the Squire's rude noises. She is prepared to give Jonathan her body but not her self, and after pulling off his ivory and ruby tokens of esteem she leaps out of the window below which the Dark Men, a gang of ghostly charcoal-burners, are conveniently positioned "wi a strang blanket". All she takes with her is a belt which "made creases in her flesh", and with the rest of his treasure intact, Squire Jonathan considers himself not yet defeated. As a re-creation of Mr Arden's love eighteen years ago for a "large blonde beautiful Scot", who ran off with a Turk or Syrian antique trader, the play makes entertaining reading, but the wind-swept prose blusters rather.

The Bagman, dedicated to Rudi Dutschke ("He thinks, therefore they damn well threw him out"), is a nightmare to chill the bones of any bourgeois liberal. This is what Mr Arden was accused of being after not supporting the action of an acquaintance convicted of a bomb-throwing incident outside Ulster House in 1969. Shortly afterwards Mr Arden resigned the honorary chairmanship of *Peace News*, partly because he felt he was sitting on the fence between principles and direct action. His subsequent visit to India brought home to him a more basic and ferocious confrontation: war between the haves and have-nots, the fed man and the hungry man.

Written in spring 1969, the play, intended for radio, is a kind of writer's confessional. The Narrator, Mr Arden, sets out along Muswell Hill Broadway in search of an *Evening Standard* and bumps into a gypsy woman who sells him an ex-army canvas bag. Alone on a dark moor, he is nearly eaten alive by four starving women, is rescued by the local Fs of L and O (Forces of Law and Order), and taken to town. As a stranger, he can only survive by providing entertainment for the jaded populace. Fortunately the contents of the bag prove a big attraction. At the word of command (in rhymed verse) a couple of dozen manikins obligingly act out the true side of their audience's natures: in the case of the mob, treachery and slaughter; in the case of the ruling class, ingenious sexual perversion. When the rebels, with whom the Narrator is forced to team up, ask the manikins to perform for them, they scuttle terrified back into their bag.

At the end of the play the Narrator's position is: "All I can do is look at what I see." In the introduction Mr Arden has said: "But I should note, for the benefit of the reader, that the attitude of the central character at the end of the story is reprehensible, cowardly and not to be imitated." Mr Arden resisted the temptation to rewrite the play in the light of his experiences in India, preferring to demonstrate his opinions of 1971 in a new play. The choice between observation or action is vital to anyone politically committed: that Mr Arden writes about this choice seems to indicate he has already settled for the former.

Have mercy on a sinner

LOPE DE VEGA:
La fianza satisfecha
Edited by William H. Whitby and Robert Roland Anderson
207pp. Cambridge University Press. £3.20.

Interest in *La fianza satisfecha* became extremely lively when in 1966 John Osborne's play *A Bond Honoured* was first performed at the National Theatre in London. Those whose curiosity about *La fianza satisfecha* was aroused by Osborne's play based on it and the subsequent reviews and correspondence which it inspired will appreciate having an easily accessible and readable version of the Spanish play. This new critical edition may well have been inspired by Osborne's adaptation, but its editors claim that for them:

> Its principal value . . . resides in the interest it borrows from and lends to contemporary plays of similar or comparable plot and theme: *comedias de santos, bandoleros* and *cautivos*, with which it shares an underlying concern about questions of sin and salvation.

El Burlador de Sevilla and *El condenado por desconfiado*, attributed to Tirso de Molina, are obvious examples.

This predominantly literary interest does not mean that any effort has been spared to provide a reliable text, which is based on an edition published in Madrid in 1729 and now in the library of the Hispanic Society of America, but showing frequent preference for a manuscript which the authors believe to be earlier. The editors agree with W. L. Fichter in favour of the authorship of Lope de Vega, as against the opinions of other modern scholars like E. M. Wilson and Daniel Rogers, whose excellent study of *A Bond Honoured* in relation to its sources, "'Not for insolence, but seriously': John Osborne's adaptation of *La fianza satisfecha*" (*Durham University Journal*, 1968) deserves to be more widely known.

Mr Rogers pleads for an open-ended interpretation of Osborne's play: and in face of the many different views of *La fianza satisfecha* it would be comforting to be non-committal about that work too; but it is clear, both from the play itself and from others on similar themes, that the seventeenth-century author aimed above all to demonstrate the boundless mercy of God in dealing with a sinner, whose motivation, however, is certainly equivocal. (The desire to offend one's family is hardly enough to account for the list of crimes in which Leonido revels, the recital of which makes the play sound like some uninhibited contemporary film.) It is not surprising that the censors were frequently baffled by the Spanish play, which appears not to have been put on after the first performance in 1781 until as recently as 1895. The play has been rarely edited since the end of the eighteenth century, and it is a pleasure to have this useful version of a work which, for all its faults and, by present-day standards, its manifold improbabilities, cannot fail to fascinate any reader interested in seventeenth-century Spanish drama on the one hand and the fiction of violence on the other.

The devotees of As

WOLE SOYINKA:
Madmen and Specialists
77pp. Methuen. £1.35.

Perhaps as a consequence of the Biafra war, and his own imprisonment in Nigeria, Wole Soyinka has written an ugly, unhappy play saddeningly different from his previous work. "Isms" used to be a joke for him. In *The Interpreters*, Sagoe chanted the merits of the Voidant philosophy, beginning: "Of -isms I dirge this day, from homoeopathic Marxism to existentialism." In *Kongi's Harvest*, rather more sourly, the political activists of the land of Isma were shown choosing a new "image" for themselves: they decided to call their political philosophy "Positive Scientificism". But in *Madmen and Specialists*, the mood of basically genial mockery is gone. The "-ism" here, the dominating philosophy, is called "As". It is a philosophy of seeing things as they are, of "abominating humanity", of accepting desperation and self-disgust. "As was, is now and ever shall be." The Voidant creed is no joke, but a shriek, concluding: "You *hole* in the *zero* of *nothing*!"

Dr Bero, the principal character, went to war as a medical specialist and became an intelligence specialist: he had to "sift through papers full of lies and know how to slap people around". Returning to his medical practice, this specialist is confronted by "madmen", three deformed cripples and a blind man, employed in sifting herbs for Bero's sister. They are under the influence of Bero's father, the founder of the "As" cult and, apparently, well known and loathed for his advocacy of cannibalism. These people seem to represent a crazy parody of Bero's sane, conventional, immoral career. The play concludes with the old father attempting an operation on one of the cripples, whom he describes as "the cyst in the system, the dog in dogma, the mock of democracy, the mar of marxism, the tick in politics".

The action of the play is grotesque, horrible, probably dramatically effective in a way. The rhetoric is quite powerful, especially the deliberate gibberish. The blind man makes a speech about the "wind of change", full of repeated political clichés, very like Lucky's long speech in *Waiting for Godot*. Sometimes the cripples chant in the Yoruba language: sometimes they cry: "R.A.T.! R.A.T.!" —short for "rom acu letigisti". It is clearly not expected that many in the audience will be able to follow the verbal argument. Meaninglessness is the theme of this play. It demonstrates failure in communication, dramatizing the solitude and despair of a playwright who was once a source of optimism.

Relations of relations

R. D. LAING:
The Politics of the Family and Other Essays
[illegible]pp. Tavistock. £1.50.

In R. D. Laing's first book *The Divided Self*, he made it clear that his main intellectual indebtedness was to the existentialist tradition, but that he diverged in important respects from the established standpoint of such authorities as Kierkegaard, Jaspers, Heidegger, and Binswanger. Psychoanalysis also influenced his outlook. He confessed

> a certain personal difficulty I have in being a psychiatrist, which lies behind a good deal of this book. This is that except in the case of chronic schizophrenics I have difficulty in actually discovering the signs and symptoms of psychosis in persons I am myself interviewing.

Since then Dr Laing has travelled rather far and shed much of his existentialist language (although he tells us that he samples behaviour by a method of social phenomenology applied to the study of multiple social contexts). The mathematical theory of sets and relations now provides him with ideas and terms (such as "mapping"). He holds that this mode of thought can be applied to study of the "psychological interior" of families in our own society; he is aware that it may prove to be a blind alley, but he hopes that "between the impossible and the trivial there may be a way that is both feasible and significant".

The second half of *The Politics of the Family*, from which its title is taken, consists of five broadcast talks for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. If this Canadian listeners grasped the rather unfamiliar information he put before them they must be formidably alert and receptive. Dr Laing drew their attention to the way in which a projection or mapping of one set of relations on to another set of relations occurs in time as well as space:

> As images of ghostly relations under the operation of projection, we induce others, and are ourselves induced, to embody them: to enact, unbeknown to ourselves, a shadow play, as images of images of images . . . of the dead, who have in their turn embodied and enacted such dramas projected upon them, and induced in them, by those before them.

A little later in the same talk Dr Laing stated his opinion that many adults (including himself) are, or have been, more or less in a hypnotic trance, induced in early infancy: we remain in this state until

> we shall find we have never lived. . . . A psychiatrist who professes to be a healer of souls but who keeps people asleep, treats them for waking up, and drugs them asleep again (increasingly effectively as this field of technology sharpens its weapons), helps to drive them crazy.

Vilifying psychiatry and psychiatrists is a recurring feature of Dr Laing's writings. Mental hospitals excite his sharp condemnation: their methods do harm, they work to a medical model which, applied to a social situation, "helps us to see what is going on about as much as do dark glasses in an already darkened room". He repeats his familiar charge that a medical diagnosis of schizophrenia may be a causal factor in creating the very illness which the psychiatrist is purporting to cure: "a self-fulfilling diagnosis of the situation tends to induce a situation as defined". Dr Laing shares this view with a handful of American psychologists and psychiatrists; he gives no serious evidence for it, but clearly holds it as a major article of faith.

It is not easy to keep track of Dr Laing's dual use of the concept of family; when he writes it in inverted commas it means the internalized "family", transformed, partitioned and synthesized. "The unity of the family is in the interior of each synthesis and each synthesis is bound by reciprocal interiority with each other's internalization of each other's interiorisation." The internalized modulated family is a matrix for dramas, an "internal template of space-time reactions in sequence". The drama has an unknown plot, its beginning and end are beyond our conception. We enact our roles, and in them we induce one member to embody the projected experience of another. This "manœuvre" can be repeated in the course of successive generations, resulting in perpetuation through transmission (comparable to that of the germ-plasm). He illustrates this by describing the social situation of a patient who had internalized a tangled set of relations of relations: "her body was a sort of mausoleum, a haunted grave-yard in which the ghosts of several generations still walked, while their physical remains rotted away. This family had buried their dead in each other". A similarly trenchant statement of how we deny experience in order to be normal and conventional, concludes by taking the analogy of our attitudes to food:

> we like the food served up elegantly before us; we do not want to know about the animal factories, the slaughter houses, and what goes on in the kitchen. Our own cities are our own animal factories; families, schools, churches are the slaughter houses of our children; colleges and other places are the kitchens. As adults in marriages and business, we eat the product.

As critics of his earlier books have said, it is difficult to do justice to Dr Laing. His quickness to pick up and apply new modes of thought (such as the theory of sets and relations) gives his writings an original but tantalizing flavour: close examination is almost impossible because of his indifference or disinclination to argue and provide evidence for his convictions. The blurb of his book says that it is written in a simple and lucid style; this could hardly be said of a passage that must have flummoxed his Canadian listeners:

> if some thoughts cannot be thought: and among the thoughts that cannot be thought is the thought that there are certain thoughts that cannot be thought, including the aforementioned thought, then: he who had complied with this calculus of antithoughts will not be aware he is not aware that he is obeying a rule not to think that he is obeying a rule not to think about x. . . .

There are plenty more passages like it.

Status strategies

ERVING GOFFMAN:
Relations in Public
Microstudies of the Public Order.
396pp. Allen Lane The Penguin Press. £3.50.

In this collection of essays Erving Goffman makes another expedition into his favourite domain of human ethology. He examines behaviour in the urban habitat from the point of view that every facet of it is significant in the strategy and tactics of social struggle. Those who are unaware of the extent to which the discipline of keeping-up-with-the-Joneses governs North American life may feel a little perplexed at times, inclined to echo the puzzled query of Kraepelin's schizophrenic twins: "Doctor, he picks his nose and I pick mine. Which of us is right?"

Professor Goffman has been highly praised for his powers of observation. Some of his findings, however, are remarkably self-evident. In "The Territories of the Self" his classification of "modalities of violation" involves a painstakingly elaborate analysis of "agencies of defilement", among them "corporeal excreta or their stains" and every kind of bodily smell from "tainted breath" to "flatus". This leads him to the obvious conclusion that

> The intrusive effect of bodily associated matters, whether proximity, touch, or excreta, varies greatly depending on what it is that intrudes. In Western society the elbows and upper back seem to have little capacity to contaminate, the sexual organs a great deal.

None the less we must remember that to repair the neglect of the obvious, especially in questions of fine detail, is sometimes a first step towards discovery. What is a little disquieting is his readiness to generalize and to accept any allegation that suits his argument. For instance, he quotes Kingsley Amis, offended by hearing a too loud voice in a Cambridge teashop: "But then . . . I am a child of the lower middle-classes, whose members keep their voices down in public. . .". Anyone with the slightest knowledge of the English lower middle-classes could have told him that their voices are only too often excruciatingly loud, and harsh; as for Kingsley Amis's claim to be a child of them, this is an ingenious anti-snobbish pose.

When considering "Remedial Interchanges" Professor Goffman seems to be on firmer ground. Here is an area where the obsession with status is paramount. "The individual does not go about merely going about his business. He goes about constrained to sustain a viable image of himself in the eyes of others." There is truth in this, even though it may suggest an unusual degree of self-consciousness.

In his final paper, "The Insanity of Place", Professor Goffman crosses over into psychiatry. The pattern that best suits the implication in the title is the hypomanic state with its unrealistic exaltation. His description is full and accurate and covers a variety of petty symptoms including excessive telephoning and general manic interference (both highly characteristic of the late Lord Beaverbrook). He appreciates the domestic chaos that ensues and the predicament of the manic's unfortunate family. Yet so strong is his particular sociological bent that he inclines to put the cart before the horse, and appears to assume that the manic is ill because his social relations are disordered instead of vice versa.

Sometimes his zeal carries him to extreme lengths. So preoccupied is he with the role of the human face in communication that he tells us:

> A person with carcinoma of the bladder can, if he wants, die with more social grace and propriety, more apparent inner social normalcy, than a man with a harelip can order a piece of apple-pie.

There is no question that Professor Goffman has been working very hard in his particular field: his writings have a high curiosity value. Whether they deserve the rapturous reception they have had in some quarters is another question.

In, out, back in

J. A. BALDWIN:
The Mental Hospital in the Psychiatric Service
A Case-Register Study
[illegible]pp. Oxford University Press for the Nuffield Provincial Hospitals Trust. £5.

In 1961 a paper appeared in *The Lancet* which caused a great deal of surprise and comment, particularly among those engaged in the administration and planning for the psychiatric services. The authors (Tooth and Brooke) were on the staff of the Ministry of Health and the Registrar General. They predicted a considerable fall of the number of in-patients in the psychiatric hospitals, which would reduce the hospital population to little over one half by 1975. This became the basis of the estimate for psychiatric hospitals in the Government's *Hospital Plan for England and Wales*, published in 1962. Since the vast majority of psychiatric hospitals were grossly overcrowded and outdated, it was pleasant to assume that much smaller numbers would have to be provided for and so considerably less money would have to be spent on updating or rebuilding psychiatric hospitals.

Regrettably, it can already be said in 1971 that the prediction seems to have been optimistic. There has been a reduction of in-patients but not to the hoped for degree. *The Mental Hospital in the Psychiatric Service* deals with the problem of this prediction, but is much more sophisticated and complicated than the relatively simple paper on which the hospital plan was based. This had assumed the continuation of a fall of numbers observed during two years at the same rate for the next sixteen years.

J. A. Baldwin has studied a small part of Scotland with a population of less than half a million. He has kept track over a number of years of all patients requiring psychiatric attention, whether as in-patients, out-patients, day-patients, or in their own homes. In this way one gets a much more useful picture of the trends. In the past twenty years the length of stay of patients in psychiatric hospitals has been reduced but the number of readmissions has increased so much that the term "the revolving door" has become part of psychiatric slang. Dr Baldwin makes interesting observations on the length of time a patient spends in hospital during repeated admissions.

He points out that the fact of observation itself tends to influence and alter the observed phenomenon, which is reminiscent of the fact that electrons and smaller particles cannot be observed without altering their behaviour. Dr Baldwin also emphasizes that studies of this kind reveal trends under existing conditions. This should enable the planner to modify the trends so that they go in more desirable directions by changing the conditions.

When the Mental Health Act of 1959 was introduced, it was hoped that local authorities would provide hostels and other facilities so that psychiatric patients could be looked after in the community. Little of this has happened, although it is worth noting that the community has become slightly more tolerant of the mentally disordered.

The temporal element

LEONARD W. DOOB:
Patterning of Time
472pp. Yale University Press. £6.95.

Academic psychologists suffer from a singular lack of sensitivity to time in its subjective aspects. So far as they are concerned, there might never have been a James Joyce, a Virginia Woolf or a Thomas Mann, nor any iconography of time. And when, on rare occasions, they do approach the topic they touch, as a rule, only on its relatively trivial features. Perhaps this is because they do not wish to be concerned with anything that cannot be measured. Some properties of subjective time have, it is true, been measured, and many more remain to be measured. Yet there remain imponderable elements of considerable psychological, neurological and psychiatric interest.

Leonard W. Doob, already known for his wide-ranging studies of communication, patriotism and nationalism, has liberated himself from a cramping and restrictive psychological tradition. He breaks away from a preoccupation with purely perceptual problems, and makes a decided effort to examine the role of our experience of time in relation to drives and emotion, to work, to crime and mental disorder, to group behaviour, to conservation and planning, and to a variety of other topics.

He seeks support for what he has to say by reference to a wide range of research, a compact résumé of which is appended to the respective chapters. If erudition is to be adjudged by the scale of a bibliography, Professor Doob deserves a prize for massive scholarship. And from 400 pages of discussion he distils some fifty principles, which are, however, not very spectacular; and a series of hypotheses, not very staggering, which remain to be tested. The fact that *Patterning of Time* clearly represents the fruits of a labour of love does not reduce its somewhat pedestrian character and tendency to verbosity. Its sources, moreover, are homogenized, so that one is at a loss to know who is the Newton and who deserves no more than a footnote.

It is a pity that Professor Doob did not take the opportunity to correct one glaring omission in the psychological literature. This is a failure to see the link between memory and time. The psychologist is almost exclusively occupied with the storage properties of memory—"buffer", short-term and long-term—while ignoring the dynamic and dramatic changes that occur in the content that is stored and the effects of these changes on thought and behaviour. In this respect the psychologist resembles an architect who, charged with the task of erecting "a house of many mansions", contents himself with designing cellars and attics. One looks in vain for any discussion of memory in Professor Doob's book.

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White mercenaries with the Moghuls

SHELFORD BIDWELL:
Swords for Hire
258pp. John Murray. £4.

Comparatively little attention has been paid to those Europeans who crop up from time to time in the pages of Indian history, leading units and formations of the armies of native princes whose internecine wars and struggles against the French and British marked the period of the Moghul empire's decline.

The best-known of them is James Skinner, but in the strictest sense he doesn't count because he was half-Indian, and it is doubtful whether even he would be remembered had he not later joined the British and raised Skinner's Horse. However, no book on the subject would be complete without him, and he duly enters *Swords for Hire*, Shelford Bidwell's excellent account of the men—three in particular—who touted their military skills round the courts of India in search of fortune and adventure.

Among them were deserters from the ships and armies of the trading companies, officers who had been disgraced, others who had resigned their commissions out of sheer boredom or were seeking relief from the burden of intolerable debt. The supply was plentiful and the demand substantial. Eventually there was no native army of any distinction that did not employ *Feringhis* to raise, train, and lead corps of regular troops.

The reason for this was that, in their brushes with the troops of the trading companies, the commanders of the lumbering Moghul armies had found that weight in men and artillery counted little against much smaller forces when these combined speed, mobility and iron discipline in battle conditions. The chivalry of India, the cavalry, could find itself routed if faced by well-served field-pieces that fired every fifteen seconds. The traditional Indian method of drawing the first salvo and then galloping in to cut the gunners down while they fumbled to reload proved useless against European-drilled batteries. Clearly, the *Feringhis* had a secret, and the Indian princes sensibly decided to buy it.

Variable as the quality of the mercenaries was, there were several of outstanding ability. Perhaps the most remarkable thing about them was the apparent effortlessness of their leap from obscurity to positions of responsibility. When Benoît de Boigne, a native of Savoy and ex-lieutenant of the French Army's Irish brigade, arrived in India, he was reduced to giving fencing lessons before obtaining a commission in the East India Company's 6th Native Infantry. The willingness of the trading companies to employ likely men, irrespective of nationality, is an indication of the open system that existed. Personal ability and loyalty to the salt, whoever provided it, were the qualities looked for. But nothing in de Boigne's career so far suggested that he might effectively command so much as a company; and yet, within a short while after resigning his commission in Madras (an affair with a fellow-officer's wife had blocked his promotion), he was raising and training two battalions for the Mahratta leader Madhaji Sindia, leading them successfully in the field and in the next few years going on to establish and command Sindia's great Army of Hindustan. He ended his Indian career as Sindia's governor.

Perron (Pierre Cuiller) began adult life as a pedlar of handkerchiefs and trinkets. After joining the French Army and arriving off the Malabar coast, he deserted, tramped to upper India, and joined a corps that had been sold by its mercenary founder, Madec, to the Rana of Gohad. Ten years later, still a sergeant, he was among the troops of another mercenary, Lestineau, who were taken over by de Boigne. Under de Boigne, Perron rose rapidly, distinguished himself in battle, and when de Boigne retired from the governorship and command of the army succeeded him.

The territory over which both these men ruled was as big as France. The account of their careers is inevitably also one of the Mahratta rise to and fall from power, a protracted and complex business which Brigadier Bidwell succeeds in making clear in outline and gripping in detail. Benoît de Boigne and Perron reached the peak of one kind of mercenary achievement, through long service with a single established leader. But there was another kind of freebooter who responded more individually to the challenge of India in anarchy, and dreamt of carving out a bit of it for himself. Such was George Thomas—the third, least important, but most colourful of the trio.

Although Thomas's origins are obscure, Brigadier Bidwell is convincing when he argues against the supposition that he was an illiterate seaman who deserted from the Royal Navy. Born in Ireland, his later fluency in written as well as spoken Persian and "Hindostanee" suggests—in Brigadier Bidwell's opinion—at least some dame-schooling in boyhood and, "since the lower-deck is not a place to learn to ride" or acquire skill in the use of squadrons of cavalry, some training as a soldier, probably as a dragoon. He would have been a hot-tempered one, capable of striking a superior, and might well have run away to escape punishment, joined a ship, and so reached India.

Be that as it may, having reached Madras round about 1781, he promptly disappeared for eight years and then turned up 1,500 miles away fighting in Reinhardt's old brigade. Reinhardt was one of the first mercenaries; one whose main gift, in Brigadier Bidwell's phrase, was for survival, which enabled him to accept any humiliation, including that of having his trousers taken down and being seated on a hot cannon until he had agreed to pay his mutinous sepoys something on account. On his death his widow managed to secure the command. The Somru Begum, as she was known, provides Brigadier Bidwell with material for some of his most entertaining passages. It was Thomas on whom her eye first fell when looking for an officer she could actually trust to fight. Later they quarrelled.

Compared with de Boigne, Thomas was a ruffian, never so happy as when serving his own guns or storming a fort and being first through the breach; but he was fated by the very qualities that made him a valuable officer to antagonize one master after another and to overreach himself with the grandiose plan to settle Hariana as his own kingdom. Finally he found himself up against the Army of Hindustan (now led by Perron) and at a crucial point in the ensuing battle ran out of steam.

Eleven months later he was dead. The destruction of the famous brigades raised by de Boigne lay only a year or two ahead, and with it the heyday of the mercenaries would be over. The old free-for-all system under which they had flourished, and the code of loyalty to the contract, even if that meant opposing one's own countrymen, were about to give way under the pressure of more sophisticated alignments.

The affairs of the East India Company were now in the hands of a formidable political and military combination: the two Wellesleys and Lake. Between them they were to dismantle the last real remnants of the Moghul empire and dash any lingering hopes that the British were only in India for the trade. At the time of the Napoleonic scare in India, Wellesley took steps to bring the British mercenaries back to their patriotic senses, with offers of commands and appointments. Presently he would be in a position to dictate to the princes what type of foreigners they would be permitted to employ, but for the moment the seduction of the British element was enough. Perron promptly dismissed those remaining under his command. Among them was Skinner, who was proud of his Rajput blood and had no objection to fighting his British father's people. He pleaded to be taken back. "Ah no, Monsieur Skinner", Perron said. "I no trust."

Trust and confidence were the king-pins of the mercenary system, and without them it could only collapse. Perhaps, though, something of the mercenary tradition continued to be upheld in the India of the Raj, particularly among members of the Political Department. As late as the 1930s, after a frontier skirmish between the army and the tribesmen, if the Political Agent for the tribal territory said in the Club, "Our chaps did rather well today", he was probably referring to the tribesmen.

The part played by the mercenaries was, if marginal to history, one whose significance should not be overlooked. By serving the warring princes, they contributed to the general state of anarchy which the British were always to find such a useful excuse for acquiring territory and expanding their influence. On the other hand, they provided their masters with much of the means to resist. After the battle of Laswari, General Lake declared: "I was never in so severe a business in my life . . . and I pray God I never may be in such a situation again."

For the modern historian the subject of the mercenaries suffers from a serious lack of reliable contemporary record, which partly explains the scant attention paid to it since. Of the twenty-one sources listed in Brigadier Bidwell's select bibliography, only a handful are exclusively concerned with the mercenaries and of these only one—the late Desmond Young's biography of de Boigne (*The Fountain of the Elephants*, 1958) is of recent date. Students of the period will be grateful to Brigadier Bidwell for rescuing the subject from such neglect and for the scholarly and authoritative approach to one that could easily lend itself to fanciful elaboration. For the general reader the subject is picturesque enough, and the author, with his narrative skill, infectious enthusiasm and engaging sense of humour, has certainly done it justice.

The tolerant Hindus

ALAIN DANIELOU:
Histoire de l'Inde
379pp. Paris: Fayard. 40fr.

Alain Daniélou is perhaps best known to the learned world as the leading European authority on Indian music, on which subject he is an adviser to Unesco. But he is also deeply versed in the history and culture of the Indian subcontinent about both of which he has decided views. He is a convinced admirer of Hinduism, whose survival-powers and social structures he regards as unique. He has little good to say either of the British—whom he regards as responsible for the partition which gave rise to Pakistan—or of the present régime which controls independent India, condemning it as ignorantly striving after means and ends antipathetic to the best traditions of the country. He regards both Christians and Muslims as intolerant dogmatists, in contrast with the broad, all-embracing tolerance of the Hindus (probably he has never seen a Hindu mob breaking up the *tazias* at a Muharram procession).

The author's statement that the two communities were accustomed to live in harmony before the British fostered an artificial antagonism through their "divide and rule" policy is historically indefensible; he ignores the genuine fears of the Muslim minority that the departure of the Raj would place them at the discretion of an overwhelmingly Hindu electorate. It is perhaps significant that the useful working bibliography which M Daniélou appends to his book contains the name of no Muslim authority on pre-Independence India and no work treating in detail of the reasons why Pakistan emerged. To the author, the situation is plain, and is summed up in his concluding sentence: "At the very moment when the Muslim invaders appeared to have lost their virulence and were assimilating themselves little by little to the other peoples of India, the European conquerors, before returning home, delivered to their fanaticism the cradle of the Hindu world."

A martyr among the anarchic Moroccans

PIERRE GRILLON (Editor):
Un Chargé d'Affaires au Maroc
La Correspondance du consul Louis Chénier, 1767-1782
2 Vols. 1,072pp. Paris: S.E.V.P.E.N. Distributed by Parkers of Oxford. £12.30 the set.

Louis Chénier, father of the poet André-Marie, was in his day known as the author of *Recherches historiques sur les Maures et l'histoire de l'empire du Maroc* (1787), based on consular experience. Now his original dispatches are published almost in their entirety, and provide an interesting if at times repetitious commentary on the north-west Africa of the time.

It was no pre-imperialist paradise that Chénier encountered. Instead of a land reflecting the achievements of a people enlightened when Europe was barely civilized, which he expected, it was one where a series of poor harvests, famine and plague could reduce the inhabitants to eating roots and pulverized bones. The sultan concentrated exclusively on the extraction of maximum revenue and the suppression of endemic revolts. His own sons, or local governors, known to have been stoned to death in front of their families, were handled as ruthlessly as the harried population, in whose welfare there was not the slightest interest; Turkey was a modern monarchy in comparison.

Anarchy was the norm, violence and cruelty habitual. Any sign of luxury was accounted a crime, to be followed by expropriation. Foreigners were similarly treated, in Chénier's view, as slaves. Consuls were kept in separate ports, dangerous open roadsteads, summarily moved from one to another, threatened with deportation or incarceration in irons, ordered inland to court, even made to escort and carry the ruler's treasure; and Moorish permission was needed to go on leave. (There were no Moroccan representatives abroad to be accorded equal facilities.) The exchange of commodities was banned at will, the level of import and export duties, and the latter reached 35 per cent, arbitrarily altered without notice. Merchants were subject to imprisonment and confiscation of goods, and liable to be transported elsewhere when the sovereign granted a monopoly, on his own behalf, to favoured local Jewish traders.

Arrogance was not uniquely a Western phenomenon. A British consul was expelled from Tangier, after local dignitaries had successively spat in his face, and dispatched on foot to Tetuán, from where he was deported to Gibraltar. (There was a war on, with the American colonies.) Chénier himself was exhibited at court, with an allegdly unopened dispatch from Louis XVI around his neck. Tribute was levied for exemption from corsair raids; victims of shipwrecks had to be ransomed; other "donations" were always being extorted; war was often threatened, on Spain and an insufficiently generous United Provinces it was waged. The agent's task, in a land where correspondence from Paris could be four months in transit and the climate was far from perpetually refreshing, was a harsh one. "Promenade" was the only relaxation. (Chénier's family remained in France.) His co-nationals were either renegades, *mauvais sujets* and adventurers, soon disillusioned at finding there were no easy fortunes to be made, or the few merchants, largely without capital and making little or no profit, quarrelsome and always critical of the official representative.

It may be asked whether Chénier drew too sombre a picture, a victim of his inability to win the sympathy of the Moors and of his resentment that Rabat offered insufficient outlet for his talents. His Turkish experience did not help with the language, which allowed self-interested interpreters too much scope. He was admittedly often reduced to conjecture, or to reporting that little of consequence needed comment. He was prone to pontification, self-justification, and the grand and shallow generalization—on the "character of Orientals", the impossibility of changing the nature of peoples, etc. A faithful France, he was well aware, always acted on the lofty precepts of honour, dignity, glory and power, whereas the sultan, like the arrogant, insolent and untrustworthy English, was moved only by interest. (If it was in the "interest" of France, however, "insinuations" against the islanders could be passed on, and though there were no great opportunities for commerce, that of his own country should conserve superiority over that of "rivals".) And his pen, in the editor's apt phrase, rarely smiled.

He may well have judged correctly in seeing a Morocco, where life was held extremely cheap, well on the way to weakness and decadence; it already needed the West for assistance in military and—for its ruler—medical matters. But was *argent* quite the sole motivating force to the extent that the consul so monotonously states? Was Moroccan society completely caste-ridden according to origin, circumstances and colour? (Some saw Islam as a force tending to overcome such divisions.) If the Moors did find their "yoke" insupportable, as stated, they were still supporting it when observers were noting the same iniquities in their land over a century later.

Pierre Grillon has perhaps too high an opinion of Chénier's powers of analysis and objectivity. Nor, in line with an old French tradition, does he utilize the views of any non-French witnesses for comparison. The relatively rare footnotes vary from the helpful to much cataloguing of which paragraphs were originally in cipher. More explanatory information could at times have been provided: when it is attempted, on the complex issue of currency, weights and measures, contradictory versions are given of the contents of the *setier* of Paris. But the introduction, after a rather hasty plunge into the state of affairs following an ineffective French bombardment of Moroccan ports in 1765, gives an essential guide to Chénier's background, and to the situation in which he was to play his self-styled role of martyr.

Before we leap

DAVID A. J. RICHARDS:
A Theory of Reasons for Action
370pp. Clarendon Press: Oxford University Press. £4.50.

ROBERT BINKLEY, RICHARD BRONAUGH, AUSONIO MARRAS (Editors):
Agent, Action and Reason
202pp. Oxford: Blackwell. £2.50.

There can be no denying that there are fashions in philosophy as in all other academic subjects, and the philosophy of action has been fashionable for a long time, indeed ever since the publication of Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*. But the fact that it is fashionable does not make a subject less interesting. On the contrary, its being fashionable means nothing else than that it is the subject most likely immediately to seem worth going on about. These two books are both instantly interesting to philosophers and will be eagerly read, deservedly, by them. It is not so certain that they will be of interest to the outside world, although in principle the subject-matter is of the kind which appeals to the layman.

David Richards's *A Theory of Reasons for Action* is unfortunately written in a very dense and difficult style. But it is both serious and absorbing, if one is prepared to make the effort. His aim is to provide a complete analysis of the concept of reasons as applied to actions. The book is divided into two parts, the first concerned with rational and the second with moral principles. But the interest, naturally enough, lies mainly in the area of overlap between the two parts. An important first step in the analysis is the account of principles; and the whole theme of the book may be seen as the attempt to relate the concept of principle in general with the concepts of rationality and of morality. Mr Richards does not believe that the existence of a principle depends upon its being *recognized* as such by anyone at a particular time, but rather upon the human capacity to entertain the concept of such a principle. This allows him to envisage the possibility of criticizing a whole society or way of life as irrational or immoral or both, on the assumption that we, the critics, recognize a principle which they, the criticized, *could* have recognized but did not. Underlying this theory is the assumption (which he regards as simply a matter of "brute fact") that people desire to be rational and desire to be moral. Thus to point out to them that there is a rational (or a moral) principle involved in a certain decision has a moving power which is capable of being effective.

The central concept of morality itself is analysed by Mr Richards (following John Rawls) in terms of an ideal contract, that is to say a contract which rational men would unanimously make if they had knowledge of everyone's desires, but had no particular interest in their own idiosyncratic desires and tastes. This analysis of morality hardly seems very perspicuous, or very convincing. Indeed, too often, the particular insights which Mr Richards provides, and his detailed examples, seem more interesting than his general thesis and this constitutes the ultimate weakness of his book; this and the extreme difficulty of reading it. Nevertheless it is a book which should be read, and argued over and considered both for its general thesis and for its detailed arguments.

Agent, Action and Reason is a collection of papers read at a colloquium held at the University of Western Ontario in 1968. Besides the papers themselves, there are comments on each by various hands. At the end of the book there is a most excellent and useful bibliography of recent writings on the philosophy of action. The four main papers are by Donald Davidson, Roderick Chisholm, R. M. Hare and D. F. Pears. Mr Chisholm's is the most complicated and might, on closer investigation, turn out to be more highly decorated than the substance of the argument really justifies. Professor Hare's is interesting, but more critical (of G. E. M. Anscombe and Anthony Kenny) than positive. Both Mr Davidson and Mr Pears deliberately confine themselves to a limited part of the subject of action, and both leave one with the pleasurable feeling that there is much more to be said and much wider implications to be drawn than are actually spelled out. This is ideal philosophical writing. One does not want all the problems solved. One wants rather to have one's attention directed to the kinds of problems which remain to be discussed another time. The book is most beautifully produced, and would be well worth buying for the bibliography, quite apart from the intrinsic appeal of the new contributions.

Orthodoxy from Oxford

BRYAN MAGEE (Editor):
Modern British Philosophy
234pp. Secker and Warburg. £3 (paperback, £1.25).

Modern British Philosophy is a tidied-up version of a successful series of radio discussions in which Bryan Magee talked to thirteen philosophers about what has been and what is going on in their subject. It falls into three main parts. First come accounts of the illustrious dead, Russell, Moore, Wittgenstein and Austin, supplied with characteristic skill by Anthony Quinton, Stuart Hampshire, D. F. Pears and G. J. Warnock. The most striking thing here is the respect shown for Russell, who was not always so treated in his lifetime. Next follow interviews with major living philosophers, A. J. Ayer, Karl Popper, Gilbert Ryle and P. F. Strawson, in which they comment on what they have done and explain what they hope to do. Of these Ryle is perhaps the most revealing and certainly the most unrepentant: there are bits of *The Concept of Mind* he would like to take back, but nothing of real substance.

Finally we have four discussions about developments in particular areas of philosophy, covering ethics (Bernard Williams), philosophy of religion (Ninian Smart), aesthetics (Richard Wollheim) and the philosophy of the social sciences (Alasdair MacIntyre). Professor Williams's account of the shortcomings of recent moral philosophy is of particular interest: it brings out neatly the difficulties of saying where morality begins and ends, and hence the way in which moral concepts are bound up with views of the world. The volume closes with a sort of appendix, a chapter in which Alan Montefiore discourses on the differences in the philosophical scene on the two sides of the English Channel and does something to explain why each party finds it so difficult to command a clear view of the other.

Mr Magee clearly planned his enterprise carefully and shrewdly: his interlocutors were not only well chosen but, thanks in many cases to his own skill in supplying appropriate questions, mostly spoke up for themselves well. The individual contributions are necessarily short (most subjects have to be touched on all too lightly), but the overall sweep and internal coherence of the book are impressive. It could be read with profit by almost any final-year honours student in philosophy, as well as by interested outsiders who wanted to know what is going on there. Both classes of reader should, however, be warned that they will find in the volume not so much indisputable truth as orthodoxy—orthodoxy as understood in Oxford, with which every contributor except Sir Karl Popper has or has had a connexion.

Philosophy for most, if not all, of those who participated in these discussions began seriously in modern Britain with Moore and Russell: before that there was nothing but metaphysics and muddle. Moore and Russell turned the subject from metaphysics to analysis, though neither, seemingly, had a clear idea of what analysis was. Their activities led on to those of the Logical Positivists, who were mostly wrong in their assertions but penetrating in the questions they asked. The traumatic effect of *Language, Truth and Logic* is insisted on more than once in the volume. But Ayer's immediate influence was brief: philosophy after the Second World War quickly became "linguistic", and found in Wittgenstein a man the genius of whose later writings is acknowledged by everyone here except Popper, who finds their contentions too vague and trivial to dispute. Characteristically, however, the person whose influence is most stressed is J. L. Austin, who commanded attention by his personality during his lifetime and by his publications after his death.

This reading of recent history is of course widely accepted in British philosophical circles, but should all the same not be taken as the whole truth. It is in the first place grossly unfair to the Idealists and especially to Bradley, who had ideas of importance in many fields of philosophy and whose thought had a significant effect on both Russell and Ryle. Next, it says nothing of a number of philosophers who, as it were, mediated between the Idealists and their modern successors, writers such as Alexander, Kemp Smith, Stout and Broad. The name of R. G. Collingwood nowhere appears in the book, though he must be the most widely-read Oxford philosopher of the present century. Other important figures passed over in silence include H. H. Price, William Kneale and W. E. Johnson. There are omissions on the subject side too. Russell's Theory of Descriptions is explained more than once, but other logical topics get scant treatment. Philosophy of science is presumably thought to be catered for in the Popper conversation, but makes little impact elsewhere. Philosophy of history is ignored, as also is philosophical scholarship, though it is arguable that Aristotle is the most influential of established philosophers in twentieth-century Britain. Professor MacIntyre alludes to the philosophical importance of some recent work on Hobbes and Mill, but other contributors appear to assume that only the very recent history of their subject is worth a serious person's attention.

Philosophy in Britain today is fairly homogeneous, but not as much as this volume suggests. We are told that there are variations within the analytic scene, but their extent is not explored. It is curious that there is no mention of the group of Dissident (or True) Wittgensteinians led by G. E. M. Anscombe and Peter Geach. Nor is proper stress laid on the distinctive nature of the contribution made by the Popperians: Sir Karl himself is clearly uncomfortable in this company, and though the others treat him with respect they show few signs of accepting his ideas, or even taking them seriously. Mr Montefiore writes usefully about what the French think of us (in so far as they do), and mentions that there are distinguished analytic philosophers in Scandinavia as well as Britain. The most surprising omission in the book is, however, any assessment of the British achievement by a well-informed American. A conversation with W. V. Quine, or with someone like Lewis White Beck, would have added enormously to the value of the series.

In defence of metaphysics

E. L. MASCALL:
The Openness of Being
Natural Theology Today
278pp. Darton Longman and Todd. £3.50.

The invitation to give the Gifford Lectures at Edinburgh in 1970-71 provided Professor Mascall with the "stimulus . . . to return for a brief period to the branch of theology" which first engaged his attention in the 1940s, when he wrote his well-known books *He Who Is* and *Existence and Analogy*. In more recent years he has devoted himself to dogmatic theology, although his interest in "the philosophical aspects of Christian theism" has continued unabated. *The Openness of Being* contains both his Gifford Lectures and four appendixes which discuss related topics: Boyce Gibson's "empirical theism", Peter Berger's "sociological approach to theism", grace and nature in Eastern and Western Christianity, and a brief treatment of man's nature as body and soul (the last of these is in effect a summary of Professor Mascall's American Bampton lectures on *The Importance of Being Human*).

The lectures make good reading, although one or two chapters dealing with Continental "transcendental theism", and with Bernard Lonergan are anything but easy. We have every reason to welcome such a sustained defence of metaphysics, and the metaphysical approach to theism, against the prevalent positivism, "neo-behaviourism" (as Professor Mascall styles it), exclusive focus on language and its "use", and generally anti-theistic assumptions of Anglo-Saxon philosophical thought and writing in our day. Professor Mascall is avowedly and unashamedly a metaphysicist; and we can be grateful to him for his eloquent, good-humoured, and very well-informed argument for it. Furthermore, his critical summaries and evaluations of little-known Continental writers, most of them Roman Catholic, are a valuable part of the book.

It is a pity, though, that Professor Mascall chose to take the "broad survey" approach to his subject, rather than to provide a carefully worked-out presentation of his own position. The great value of his two earlier books was precisely this; *The Openness of Being* has an episodic character, sometimes even an allusive and "once over lightly" quality, which lessens its importance. And it is in those chapters where he *does* argue for his own views, or where he concentrates on one position which he holds erroneous (notably in his detailed demolition of Leslie Dewart's theory that God is not "being" but "presence"), that he shows his acute mind and his constructive ability. The weakest parts of the book are those in which the lecturer rather offhandedly dismisses writers and views with which he disagrees (for instance, his remarks about Professor John Knox, and about Charles Hartshorne's contention that God should be conceived as both "abstract" and "contingent" rather than as simply one or the other).

The discussion of theology and language is admirable, not least because of Professor Mascall's insistence on the "social and linguistic context in which it is used". His criticism of Leonard Hodgson's well-known adage, "what must the truth have been and be if men who thought and spoke as they did saw it and spoke of it like that", is acute if not entirely convincing; while his comments on Gilbert Ryle are a devastating rejection of "neo-behaviourist reductionism". The consideration of the ontological argument, as revived and restated by Professor Hartshorne and Norman Malcolm, confirms the uneasy feeling many have had about the matter—that we have here an "illicit shift of meaning" between logical necessity and ontological necessity.

The case for a realistic epistemology is well-presented—and here Professor Mascall is at his best, not least in his critical comments on idealism and in his argument for "extra-mental being" as the primary object of perception rather than the ideas of things entertained in our minds. The lecture on "the openness of being" is also valuable for its stress on God's incessant energizing in "every finite being", whereby the creatures are made open "for influxes of his creative activity".

The lecture on "God and Time", however, is disappointing. For some reason Professor Mascall interprets Boethius's definition of eternity—*interminabilis vitae simul et perfecta possessio*—as suggesting timelessness in God rather than the divine *timefulness*. What is more, his position in this respect leads him to say that

God's presence to the world makes all the difference conceivable to the world—the difference between existence and non-existence—but, in the strict sense, the presence of the world to God makes no difference to God.

—and this on the grounds that "God is infinitely more" than the world. We see why the Gifford lecturer fails to see the point of Whitehead's (as well as Hartshorne's, and Boyce Gibson's) view that religious awareness shows God, not as himself "developing". It is unfortunate that Professor Mascall cannot grasp the sense in which "process" in God is intended in such thinking; but as so participant in the creation that he can and does "surpass himself" in his earlier "states" of actuality although he is insurpassable in relation to anything not himself. Despite his occasional kindly words about Whitehead, some may feel that Professor Mascall is constitutionally unable to appreciate the position which process thought seeks to assert.

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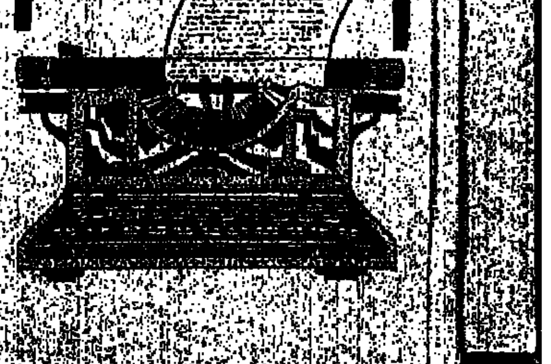

What is school for?

DON ADAMS (Editor)
Education in National Development
234pp.

TIMOTHY ROGERS (Editor):
School for the Community
A Grammar School reorganises.
170pp.

Routledge and Kegan Paul. £2.50 each.

"The present school system serves primarily to ensure the succession of middle-class children to status levels no lower than those of their parents." Thus Everett H. Reimer, in the most interesting essay in *Education in National Development*. Most contributors accept this statement of how things are, not just in Britain or the United States but everywhere. And if the reader quarrels with this generalization he will at least probably have to accept Don Adams's quiet observation, in the Introduction, that whereas "modern teachers and professional educators tend to view schooling as the preparation for lifelong learning", students and their parents "frequently view it as the preservation or enhancement of status".

This book is a collection of essays by social scientists, most of them American; much of it will seem, to the reader not hardened to the language of social scientists, appallingly written and very hard to read. Who would have thought, for example, that "socialization and enculturation processes" have happened to you and me, or, that we may have actually enjoyed them? One welcomes John Vaizey's essay with a feeling embarrassingly like that of nineteenth-century English tourists meeting among foreigners; only he of these eleven could have written: "Let me put it like this: Why do people work?" But the book as a whole presents valuable challenges to teachers and educational planners, and it may be salutary to be faced with unpalatable truths such as those about status already quoted, presented in mechanical and unimpassioned language.

Education in National Development is mainly about educational technology in less developed countries: how to spend money on education in countries desperately short both of education and of money. The liberal-humanist may be put off by the repeated use of the words "technology", "efficiency", "productivity", "input" and "output"; and Professor Vaizey himself prefaces his essay with what is virtually a note of dissent, seeing, in such "pseudo-economic terms", "a contempt for artistic and cultural matters [which is] alarming". But the "cost" and "efficiency" of education in Latin America, Africa and Asia are indeed very important; particularly when misconceptions are widespread. The main achievement of this book, in fact, is to question traditional assumptions of European and American schooling, which less developed countries tend to take over. Mr Reimer, for example, says that the combination of "selection for social roles and social status" and the getting of knowledge within the Western educational tradition "makes school a failure experience, and thus a punishment system, for half the students. Most of the other half are forced to adopt educationally sterile forms of answer-getting behaviour". The school system—that is, the whole idea of having schools at all—needs, in this view, either basic reform or replacement; and he tends to favour replacement. And there is nothing frivolous or insubstantial about his essay.

Behind the book stands one basic conflict, which admits no easy compromise. We increasingly see education as a human right, something which may help to give human beings equality of opportunity. Yet experience so far suggests that educational systems perpetuate and even intensify social stratification. In particular, a developing country tends to attach high importance to economic growth and what we used to call "leadership qualities". Nyerere's programme of "Education for Self-Reliance" is, according to Philip Foster, a bold attempt to put egalitarianism ahead of national economic growth in Tanzania. But mostly the picture is of developing countries trying to learn to run the rat-race; and some of the writers in this book, such as Daniel Rogers in his attempt to look at the school "as a firm which produces education", seem quite ready to hold the stopwatch.

We have heard plenty in England in the past fifteen years about equality of educational opportunity. *School for the Community* is a warm and modest book about the planning and first year of operation of the Bosworth School, a Leicestershire Upper School and Community College. The book is written by the men and women on the spot, and it will be of simple practical use to others planning Upper Schools in Britain. The Bosworth School is, of course, a comprehensive school, and it is non-streamed. The social divisiveness of education diagnosed by Professor Adams's team is the foe that—possibly more than ignorance or under-achievement—English comprehensive schools are most concerned to fight. Certainly it is in England a great dragon, and still fiery. In the Students' Guide to the new school (reprinted in an appendix) occur the terrible words: "From whichever school you come, we welcome you as a full and equal member of the Bosworth School." It is a grisly reflection on English education and society that they should be felt necessary (and for a shrewd pupil they seem far from reassuring).

Throughout the book the emphasis is on the school's responsibility for social values. The opening paragraph of the Students' Guide ends, in a strong English tradition, with an exhortation to share "whatsoever things are true . . . honest . . . just . . . pure . . . lovely and of good report". The liberal humanist will be much happier at the Bosworth School than in the pages of *Education in National Development*; Leicestershire Upper Schools are some of the best things in English education at the moment, and not many teachers in this country would quarrel with their sense of social purpose. But we ought not to ignore, whatever we think of them, the astringent views of Mr Reimer, who upturns most of the Leicestershire assumptions by telling us that

students would probably be better off with fewer hours spent in class, in less elaborate space . . . and with less planned value-teaching, most of which is mutually cancelling in today's school situation.

Self-contained

LORNA WING:
Autistic Children
A Guide for Parents
157pp. Constable. £2.

Children who fail to respond to human contact were first described as a distinct group and named autistic by Professor Leo Kanner in the early 1940s. In this country there are now estimated to be at least 6,000, but only 300 receive training tailored to their special needs. The short-sightedness of this gap in our social provision was made clear by a Maudsley Hospital follow-up study of some autistic children who had been lucky enough to have such special education. Among them was discovered a trainee computer operator, and the accumulating research on autistics shows that they are sometimes of above average intelligence, that they can be taught to read, to write and even occasionally, as in the case of the trainee computer operator, to escape the prisons of their own personalities, the αὐτός of their Greek name, in order to take a place in society.

This is the hopeful basis of part of Lorna Wing's lucid and practical guide. What she tells will help not only the parents of autistic children whom she is primarily addressing, but also teachers and social workers who can gain insights into their more general work from this specialist study. For one of the interesting points that emerges from her detailed descriptions of the behaviour and characteristics of the autistic child is that many ordinary children at some stage exhibit one or more of the isolating symptoms of autism. What mother has not on some occasion had to drag from a crowded shop a screaming [illegible] who is speechless with rage or unwilling to communicate [illegible] wants, while she is [illegible] embarrassment, unable to [illegible] the norms of civilized conduct [illegible] ten thousand times harder [illegible] autistics to establish the [illegible] human understanding, from the [illegible] vious hurdle of learning [illegible] less fathomable problems of [illegible] perception.

On the education and [illegible] ment of autistic children, [illegible] Wing, who works with the [illegible] Psychiatry Research Unit at [illegible] Institute of Psychiatry, gives [illegible] hope with plenty of common [illegible] about consistency and tact, firm[ness] and love. She is not afraid [to] suggest the bribe of a favourite [illegible] for the girl who would not [illegible] shoes or to stress the need to [say] "no" to a tyrant even if [illegible] innocent. Like many infant [illegible] she finds learning is often [illegible] successful when linked with [illegible] ure.

On the causes of autism, how[ever] she can offer no progress: "[illegible] possibility of their discovery [illegible] as far away as ever." Opinion is divided between those who [illegible] an emotional cause, whether [illegible] linked with the parents' [illegible] ties, and those who believe the [illegible] must be physical despite the [illegible] tion in the handicaps of di[illegible] cases. Since failure to commu[nicate] verbally is one invariable chara[cter]istic of the condition, the [illegible] hopeful line of research may [illegible] our understanding of language [de]velopment. Autism occurs about as often as total deafness in chi[ldren] and more often than total blind[ness] so the welcome for a book like [this] should be warm.

Local landmarks

DAVID WARDLE:
Education and Society in Nineteenth-Century Nottingham
211pp. Cambridge University Press. £3.40.

A study of education in a Midland town in the nineteenth century should add a good deal to an understanding of developments which have been discussed mainly from a national point of view and in the light of national politics. By discussing the forms of education developed at different periods in relation to the economic and social life of a particular community, and contrasting findings with the established general picture, a local history can add depth and bring to notice new points deserving attention.

To this end it is necessary to take a stand within the local community and move with it through phases of development whose landmarks may well differ from those charting the progress of the national economy or national education; or which may have peculiar features even by comparison with other communities in the same region. By this means it becomes possible to look at educational provision right across the board—avoiding the separate categorization of elementary, secondary, adult education as in the textbooks—and to attempt the difficult task of assessing its actual extent, or operational effect, in the context of the community's development.

Here the local study has the advantage that it can take in the whole range of community life—for instance, changing forms of employment and the training they require, newspapers to read and libraries to read in, the rise of political and cultural associations—and indicate how formal educational institutions fit into, or contribute to changing, the picture. It can also bring to life local parties or movements active in promoting or preventing educational developments, rather than dealing in abstractions such as "the Church" and "the nonconformist interest"; provide a map of the distribution of schools in relation to the social structure of the locality which enables critical attention to tables of attendance figures or reports [of] the central inspectorate; and [illegible] track down local entrants in [the] registers of public boarding s[chools] to indicate how many of the [domi]nant local families lacked a p[er]s[onal] interest in the extension of s[econ]dary schooling locally.

Education and Society in Nineteenth-Century Nottingham is [illegible] local history of the kind descr[ibed]. Originating in two theses on [the] subject, it takes a limited area [with] the intention "to study the in[ter]action between education a[nd] society at a time when a system [of] education was in process of devel[op]ment" and "to suggest possi[ble] points of contrast between the fi[nd]ings of a specific local study [and] those revealed by the history [of] education in the country as [a] whole".

This implies a failure to [break] free from the traditional treatment limited to formal education consid[ered] by categories of institution which in turn rules out any comp[le]te picture of educational [illegible] in relation to social developments. The lat[ter] are discussed in two prelimin[ary] chapters on the Industrial Revolu[tion] as it affected Nottingham and the social structure of the city in the early nineteenth century, and there[after] tend to drop out of sight.

There are then two chapters on the establishment and internal work[ing] of voluntary schools and one covering the school board and ele[mentary] schools, embarked on with[out] consideration of the state of affairs by the 1870s in terms of the local economy and political [illegible]. Then back to the beginning of the century in each of the remaining three chapters, to cover secondary, technical and higher education (in[stitutions] outlined *seriatim*), private schools, adult education.

With this last the enterprise comes to a full stop. Since there [is no] attempt to draw findings together in the form of conclusions, there is no clear indication how developments in Nottingham compare or contrast with the picture of national trends; nor, indeed, how different aspects were related and how, taken to[gether, they contributed to the life] of Nottingham itself.

Thinking productively

HUGH LYTTON:
Creativity and Education
132pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul. £1.30 (paperback, 65p).

KENYON CALTHROP and GRAHAM OWENS (Editors):
Teachers for Tomorrow
Diverse and Radical Views about Teacher Education
180pp. Heinemann Educational. £1.90.

BRUCE KEMBLE (Editor):
Fit to Teach
A Private Inquiry into the Training of Teachers, with Recommendations.
216pp. Hutchinson. Paperback, 65p.

In a recent serio-comic catalogue of modern educational jargon by some of the distinguished contributors to the Black Papers, a considerable number of definitions referred the sceptical reader back to the magic word "creativity". For creativity is probably the quality most prized by progressive educationists and most questioned by those of the old school who see it as the lazy boy's easy option out of irregular verbs and *Gallia est omnis divisa in partes tres*.

Hugh Lytton is an educational psychologist and in his *Creativity and Education*, in the always useful, sometimes outstanding "Students Library of Education", he makes a doughty attempt to define both the creative process and creative people. We go from God via Coleridge and a great deal of Koestler to a full account of what psychologists mean by convergent and divergent thinking: two new poles for personality assessment which look like becoming as much a part of our psychological vocabulary as introversion and extraversion. Mr Lytton is careful to point out the pitfalls of testing how inventive people are at solving problems or seeing possibilities, but all his tact cannot veil the ludicrous aspects of research projects like a key one, often quoted, which was conducted by the Institute for Personality Assessment and Research at Berkeley. IPAR invited to the Institute to live with the assessment staff for a weekend a group of architects, writers and mathematicians, who were generally agreed to be creative and eminent, and a group of ordinary practitioners of these professions. This circular method came up with the conclusion that the alphas were highly intelligent, independent of mind, forceful and sensitive people.

It is easier to say what we mean by creativity than to know how to nurture it. Mr Lytton certainly gives a succinct survey of the kind of flexible outlook that he believes develops productive thinking both at home and at school. But then one of his section-headings gets to the nub of the matter with the apt question "Is education biased against creativity?" Schools are, after all, institutions partly dedicated to the transmission of culture and social norms. Psychologists have found that the most original pupils, the question-raisers and unorthodox thinkers, are not the most popular with teachers.

This conflict within the aims of the modern educator produces some of the most thoughtful essays in two welcome books on the training of teachers. In *Teachers for Tomorrow* Margaret Maden gives another twist to it when she says that, although it is often assumed that schools will change through the impact of newly trained teachers bursting into the schools with their modern notions, the evidence suggests that they find it hard to put their ideas into practice in the real-life situation of the classroom. "Innovation in schools seems, at present, to occur through individual schools working in a chance and haphazard way with Schools Council or Nuffield schemes." She argues that student-teachers need more rigorous intellectual training to give them the confidence to put their modern ideas into practice.

It will be some comfort to the Black Paper side (and will perhaps help to bridge the somewhat artificial gap between them and their opponents) to know that the traditional anti-intellectualism of the training colleges, pointed out by William Taylor and others, is now increasingly under attack from the progressives. Michael Storm echoes this trend in his contribution to *Fit to Teach*, and the summary of recommendations for the reform of teacher-training which ends this book begins by asking that the entry requirements for teacher-training courses be on a par with those for a university or a degree course in a polytechnic. A new formula is then suggested of a two-year academic course after which there could be taken either a third academic year leading to a conventional degree or a year's practical training in schools followed by a year of educational theory for those who still wanted to teach. Undoubtedly, such a flexible arrangement would increase the status and toughen the fibre of the teaching profession. While we wait for the James Commission to report officially, it deserves to be debated.

Cops and aldermen

D. RUMBELOW:
I Spy Blue
The Police and Crime in the City of London from Elizabeth I to Victoria.
250pp. Macmillan. £4.60.

The great majority of histories of British police forces are poor performances, usually consisting of bare facts and bewhiskered faces, with a total disregard of the society from which the police are recruited and which they exist to safeguard so far as it will allow them to do so. Mr Rumbelow, a constable in the City of London Police, has produced a history of the early centuries which is of altogether better quality. His research has been thorough and industrious: he has mastered the literature on the subject and gone back assiduously to records. His notes and bibliography are a model for anyone seeking to write police history. The style in a few places leaves something to be desired but is generally adequate and clear.

The book is divided into two main parts: one concerned with the old order of policing up to the Act of 1839; the other with the new order under Daniel Whittle Harvey, until his death in 1863.

The earlier period shows similarities with the policing of other great towns which have combined amateur with professional peacekeepers, the uneven zeal of the former inevitably necessitating their replacement by the latter, with public parsimony confining police recruitment to the indigent and unfit, and leaving much room for corruption. It seems that the peace of the City was often broken and that personal security was poor. A huge lack of public compassion, reflected in savage penal laws and general neglect, was aggravated by the power-politics of England's leading democratic community as the citizens successfully resisted the police reforms urged by the authorities.

There was thus ample scope for the operations of the dishonest police official Hitchen and of Jonathan Wild (who organized London's crime to an unparalleled extent in the early eighteenth century) and for outbreaks of mob violence, the most notable of which was the Gordon Riots of 1780. The City's influence in Parliament was powerful; it was a prime mover in killing Pitt's big police Bill of 1785 and would have killed Peel's monumental measure of 1829 if he had not eventually excluded the City from its provisions.

The new model of police in Westminster and the environs quickly inspired the City's reformers to seek similar arrangements in place of the substitute-constables and unfit watchmen who had made their own system ineffectual, but fear of an independent police chief and of a force which might impose the central government's will upon the City wards blocked any radical improvements until, after many attempts, the City of London Police Act was passed in 1839.

Mr Rumbelow gives a vivid account of the first Commissioner appointed under the Act, Harvey, the harsh and hapless man to whom it fell to recruit, administer and discipline a new police force in circumstances even more adverse than those which had militated against Rowan and Mayne as they struggled to bring the metropolitan force into existence. The miserable pay—about a pound a week—out of which constables were expected to lodge and keep themselves and their families, usually renting a single room in some squalid tenement; and the conditions of service made police work oppressive and injurious to health. As in the metropolitan force wastage was high: "In twenty years Harvey recruited 3,136 men; in the same period 2,562 left (600 were dismissed, this was more than the whole force". Casual labour had to be used to supplement the police deficiencies of strength (the winter average of men off sick was between thirty and forty per cent). The documentation of this inner history of the force is very good.

Another excellent feature of *I Spy Blue* is the substantial amount of space given to the social problems in terms of which the police had to work. It was an intimidating business being a police officer in Harvey's time, with the incessant confrontations in the street and the even more discouraging discipline in the station. That Harvey kept the force together at all must have been as much due to bad economic conditions as to his own efforts and abilities.

Nevertheless, he did keep it together. Mr Rumbelow's reading of Harvey's achievement is probably correct. The first Commissioner did the right deed for the wrong reasons, fighting the issue of police independence of politicians as a personal war with the aldermen, and upholding the strict letter of the law as a policy of self-defence. The achievement was real, whatever the means of its accomplishment may have been. Harvey had laid a lasting foundation on which an independent and professional police could grow from strength to strength.

It all comes from the Latin

MICHAEL HARRISON:
The London That Was Rome
264pp. Allen and Unwin. £3.75.

The title of this book disguises its true nature, that of the "first Guide in fifteen hundred years to the Roman City of Londinium Augusta". By a method that "one eminent scholar" (alas anonymous) has called "an archaeological miracle", Michael Harrison claims to have drawn an "Ordnance Survey map of Londinium".

This method he calls the "New Archaeology", but archaeologists who have been using this term for some years past will find here nothing of the systems theory, the locational analysis or the computer techniques that it has come to be associated with; Mr Harrison's method is much simpler: he has presumed that the street, church and inn-names of medieval and later London are derived directly from the names of the streets and edifices which stood in the same locations in Roman times.

"Directly" is perhaps a misnomer, for Mr Harrison takes all his readings from the imagined "Old London" variant of Old Welsh, which is itself largely derived from Latin roots. This process is dressed up with all the paraphernalia of metathesis and lenition of consonants, and most of the readers of this avowedly popular work will have to take the hefty chunks of undigested and ill-constructed etymology on trust, though this may be weakened by the comprehensible portions of the text.

Much of it is taken up with harmless nonsense—churches dedicated to St Andrew are "nothing to do with the saint who was crucified upside down" (*sic*) but derive their names from the Latin locative *antro*, "at the lock-up", pronounced in "Old London" as *andro*; each church marks the site of a Roman jail. We have been similarly misled about St Peter, who is not *petrus*, "a rock", but *praetorium*, a military headquarters.

Streets suffer as much as saints—any street with "Cooper" in its name refers not to barrel-making but to *caupona*, "retail-shop, tavern"; the charmingly-named Gropecuntelane is not, as Eilert Ekwall would have it (*Street-Names of the City of London*; Oxford, 1954) "indecent", but derived from *gubernacula*, "government" and *comitium*, "place of assembly". "Our ancestors", remarks Mr Harrison, "were not half so smutty-minded or even coarse." Perusal of the *Miller's Tale* or the Anglo-Norman *fabliaux* might change his mind.

Apparently simple pub-names are, of course, nothing of the sort; "Coach and Horses" refers not to the vehicles that arrived at the inns of England for several centuries, but to *cocina et horrea*, "cook-shop and granary": the tiny seed of Mr Harrison's original idea thus runs riot for more than 200 pages, supporting on a root of minimal depth and penetration a luxuriant farrago of speculation that sorely needs the application of Occam's Razor.

The historical thesis, if it may be called such, is that London was occupied continuously during the Dark Ages, and not abandoned for a century and a half between AD 457 and 597 as some scholars maintain. Although commonsense for once enjoins agreement with Mr Harrison, his "proof", based as it is on the circular argument of the continuity of street-names, is valueless.

The plethora of *praetoria*, *antra*, and apparent defences within Londinium thrown up by the "New Archaeology" suggests to Mr Harrison that London must have begun as a constellation of small fortlets around an unwalled settlement that was only later enclosed; an unlikely and archaeologically and historically unproven assertion.

Reading this book is, in short, like thrusting one's way through a loose patch of brambles—continuous prickles of annoyance, but nothing to hold one, even momentarily.

Phrases in praise

DAVID PIPER:
London
288pp. Thames and Hudson. £3.25.

This book is, outwardly, rather ostentatious and ponderous for a guidebook, if by guidebook is meant a book to carry on one's travels. Its illustrations are lavish, ranging from such familiar things as "Gin Lane" and the padoga in Kew Gardens to such exotica as the Etruscan bust in the British Museum of a woman holding a horned bird. But it is not just one more to add to the already large number of picture books on London.

This is, in fact, a history of London. The growth and changes in a city through more than a thousand years should be an exciting story, and David Piper's virtue here, as in his *Companion Guide to London*, is that he is always searching for the phrases which shall preserve that excitement. He describes the remains of the original city in our museums as "the now precious junk thrown away by the citizens in Roman times".

Nash's work, again, in Regents Park sets him searching for the right phrase, and he has found it in "a classical dream to bewitch the Mediterranean yearnings of Londoners under their grey northern skies". If, as some may think, Mr Piper praises a little too elaborately, he can, by contrast, be very brief and blunt when condemning what he does not like. The tombs and monuments with which Westminster Abbey is overfilled he calls the "paraphernalia of the illustrious English dead".

He is particularly good in his chapter on the museums and art galleries: here he is on his own ground. For twenty-one years he was Assistant Keeper, and then Director, of the National Portrait Gallery which, as he says, has been rearranged so that it now "tells a story". He says of Lord Elgin salvaging the marbles from the wrecked Parthenon that "it reads like a first class adventure story". One feels that this is the phrase which the author would like used of his own book.

Why do they do it?

F. V. SMITH:
Purpose in Animal Behaviour
192pp. Hutchinson University Library. £2.25 (paperback, 90p).

Steering his way carefully between the temptations of vitalism on the one hand and what Marx called "vulgar materialism" on the other, F. V. Smith explores purposive behaviour in animals. Assuming that "purpose" can be defined in terms of its parameters in human actions, then at what point did it enter the evolutionary story? Does it represent a stage only attained by man? Or is this merely a reflection on the definition that man himself places on the word?

What might appear to be a purely philosophical problem, however, has important repercussions on the study of ethology and in particular on those comparative studies of behaviour that include both men and animals. An older generation happily spoke of their study material "striving", "seeking" or "pursuing" certain goals in much the same way that humans do; another generation dismissed this approach as anthropomorphic. Carnap, for example, conceived of behaviour as a physical set of phenomena and he regarded terms like "depression", "excitement" and even "anger" (when used to describe inner states) as metaphysical speculation.

B. F. Skinner also feels that behaviour is a function of some condition that can be adequately described in physical terms, so that to say that an animal drinks because it is thirsty is mere tautology. Professor Smith tends more towards E. C. Tolman's position, for whom behaviour "reeks of purpose and cognition" but is best understood by the "behaviour determinants" that intervene between the initiating physiological state and the observed behaviour. The logico-deductive system of C. L. Hull is not favoured; it may eventually confirm empirical findings but it seems to await its Euclid.

The kernel of this book is the definition given to "purposive behaviour". Professor Smith offers three tentative criteria. The organism must show some capacity to act independently of environmental factors; there must be some variation in the mode of attainment of the goal; and an element of retention should be present, such that the behaviour is influenced by objects or situations not immediately present or it should persist independently of the situations that initiated it.

The examples chosen to illustrate this study are all fairly well known and are drawn almost wholly from the vertebrates, including man. The author cannot resist, however, the work of von Frisch and others on navigation in bees, although he does not deal with the social life of insects, which would have provided an equally interesting parallel with patterns found in birds and mammals. The aspects chosen are the attachment of young to their parents (or to a human or other surrogate), methods of orientation (especially in migrating birds and fishes), social organization in scattered and compact communities, sexual rituals (fiddler crabs, some birds, antelopes) and the ever popular topic of territoriality.

Professor Smith then describes some features in the social organization in primates and gives a short and rather unsatisfactory account of man's early ancestors. It is unfortunate that these chapters do not generate the kind of discussion that the first part of the book seems to promise.

Using the criteria of retention, independence of action and variability of behaviour in different circumstances to attain a familiar result, the author finds purposive behaviour of some degree in virtually all the examples given. Even the celebrated worms that R. M. Yerkes trained to negotiate a T-shaped maze showed some form of association from which awareness and thus purposive behaviour could have evolved. The point at which purpose enters the story is not answered because no qualitative discontinuity can be found. It is a pity that Professor Smith does not explore the invertebrate world, for one would like to know whether Fabre's processionary caterpillars, endlessly marching round the rim of a tub, were demonstrating praiseworthy singleness of purpose or were locked in a behaviouristic tautology ruled solely by cold, chemical necessity.

There she blew

GEORGE L. SMALL:
The Blue Whale
248pp. Columbia University Press. £4.75.

Perhaps the most spectacular of all victims of human exploitation is the Blue Whale, the largest living animal. The story of its ruthless near-extermination, in both the Atlantic and the Pacific, fully deserves retelling.

The case of the Blue Whale shows how ineffectual have been organized and well-intentioned efforts to curb the slaughter. In spite of the Convention for the Regulation of Whaling (1931), the Protocol of 1944, and the establishment of the International Whaling Commission (1946—meeting annually since 1949), the profitability of whaling continued to reduce stocks down to commercial, and for certain species biological, extinction. About a hundred Blue Whales may remain in the Atlantic and a similar number in the Pacific—a number that is probably too small for the species to maintain itself.

The tragedy of the Blue Whale is described with some passion in this well-documented account by George L. Small. Neither the International Whaling Commission nor the whaling companies, nor indeed certain nations, are spared, so that many of those who provided information for the author have preferred to remain anonymous. The intentions of the whalers are obvious enough, although Professor Small seems puzzled that the companies showed so little concern for future prospects. A single monopoly might have done so, but in a rapidly lost company [illegible] could afford to stand aside if others would be likely to rush in.

The worthy intentions of the Commission are equally obvious, at least on paper; but they have been repeatedly crippled by provisions originally designed to safeguard adherence to the Commission. Thus, the virtual right of veto, the frequent exclusion of the press, and the lack of authority to limit the number of factory ships, have too often prevented effective measures of protection.

The author believes that even as late as 1956 the Blue Whale could have been saved. It was not until 1963 that the Commission finally recommended complete protection, only to find themselves forced to submit to "Japanese blackmail . . . The obvious willingness of the Japanese to kill the last Blue Whale was so blatantly rapacious that even the Japanese themselves felt obliged to proffer an explanation." They claimed, therefore, that the whales caught in the one area hitherto kept open for fishing were not really Blue Whales at all, but "Pygmy Blue Whales", a distinct sub-species that should be considered separately for purposes of biological study, conservation and whaling. Protection was eventually given to the Blue Whale (and to its perhaps mythical sub-species) only in 1965. This time there were no objections from the Japanese; they had failed to catch a single Blue Whale in the preceding season.

This is an appalling case but in no sense unique (except for the sheer size of the victim). Professor Small has done an excellent job in documenting it and one can only hope that his book is not an epitaph.

I'll go quietly

PASCAL LAINE :
L'Irrévolution
182pp. Paris: Gallimard. 16fr.

Sottenville, we are to suppose, is one of those dreary towns built of shiny red brick in Picardy or Artois, somewhere not far from Cambrai perhaps. Here the young narrator—we never find out his name—comes to teach philosophy. Not in a *lycée*, which would be usual, but in a *lycée technique*, where the customers feel more at home with a camshaft than with Kant.

He isn't short of brains. He's an *agrégé*, so that the *lycée technique* is a sort of self-immolation. A sense of futility and frustration haunts him. The *événements de mai* found in him no prise-up of pavés, no activist, but rather a listlessly sympathetic spectator. And after all the tumult and the violence, has there been any change sufficient to make the clobberings and the running eyes worth while? Not that he can see. His trouble is the trouble of his times: "L'Irrévolution", that's to say, a too generalized dissatisfaction, a criticism so totally destructive that it destroys even itself.

With a certain doggedness he tries to get on terms with his class; he encourages them to express themselves, and not to be led by the nose by M le Directeur and M le Censeur. But he fails to make any breach in Authority's defences. He mingles hesitantly with his pupils' families—with Sandrine's numerous clan, and especially with Marco, the grandfather, once a woodcutter, who links the present-day, Prisunic Sottenville with the vast, primitive France that is still not so very distant in time. There are no "scenes", no confrontations. In the end this slumming, well-intentioned *agrégé* runs away from his muted challenges back to the vast anonymity of Paris where he belongs, and feels, if he feels so anywhere, at home. And that is all.

L'Irrévolution is a sort of meditation, a statement of the intellectual's dilemma. Society has certainly missed its way. The *agrégé* and his kind are aware of this, can be articulate about it, yet are wholly without any certainty of objective. They are conscious of the inevitability, and at the same time of the undefinable shamefulness, of acceptance.

L'Irrévolution is a subtle book, very low-key, slow-moving and featureless like a stretch of Picardy canal, yet gripping because of its deep penetration into a state of mind widespread among intellectual youth—of every generation, not only this one. "J'ai beau ne pas être vieux, je suis un peu tout ça", says the narrator. And indeed he is.

Crime in short

PETER ALDING :
Despite the Evidence
183pp. John Long. £1.25.

Another of Peter Alding's well-made professional stories of bobbying in a seaport town.

FRANCIS CLIFFORD :
The Blind Side
224pp. Hodder and Stoughton. £1.50.

A priest in a thriller implies some serious intention, and on the whole is seriously attempted only by capable, interesting writers like Francis Clifford, confident of being able to integrate their tricky material in equilibrium with their other matter. Here the priest, a good if impetuous man, does yet muddle his duty in starving Biafra. His brother deliberately betrays his duty in London. At the crunch, however, the blind side of the title may well lie where goodness cannot see it. At this crunch, the serious level is just not quite impressive enough. Still, a good novel-thriller, till then nicely balanced and well plotted.

RICHARD FALKIRK :
The Chill Factor
223pp. Michael Joseph with Arlington Books. £2.

An all-right story about an agent of ours in Iceland, helping the occupying Americans to out-manoeuvre the Russians. It gains much from the background; without it, the tale would be a bit soggy.

DICK FRANCIS :
Bonecrack
214pp. Michael Joseph. £1.75.

Dick Francis is really first-rate, for all-round unpretentious thriller-writing excellence probably the best we have. So far it has always been a pleasure to pick up his latest book, confident of finding a skilfully made and told story, as shapely as a classic fairy story. In his case we know—so far—that it will be about racing or flying or both, and always using the expertise excitingly as machinery for human, likable characters. *Bonecrack* is a horse book, about a stop-gap trainer and a psychotic millionaire who wants his untrained cub of a son to ride the stable's favourite in the Derby. The book has, like most of Dick Francis's, a sweet moral tone, as much in its only moderate sexual content as in its attitude to father-son relationships and especially the one the book ends with.

EDWARD HYAMS :
The Death Lottery
224pp. Longman. £1.95.

Not all may agree, but to at least one mind Edward Hyams's best talent resides in sophisticated, complicated comedy, and has done ever since *Sylvester*. As becomes the passing years, the comedy has become yet more sophisticated and, enjoyably, more macabre. The title indicates one plot ploy but there are many others, equally ingenious and mostly delightfully horrid.

H. F. R. KEATING :
Inspector Ghote Goes by Train
222pp. Collins. £1.50.

Here at last is the Inspector Ghote book we have been waiting for, the perfectly shapely tale. Our hero takes the train from Bombay to Calcutta to pick up a large-scale confidence trickster who is not in Calcutta, but facing, and tricking, Ghote on the train. Some other travellers come too, and go too on the journey back when Ghote is escorting, in the special bogie, the unmasked but still infinitely slippery villain. Many a crime story set on a train has become a classic: there is something about a train that brings out the best in a crime writer. This new book will certainly rank in that special and delightful class.

ROY LEWIS :
The Fenokee Project
191pp. Collins. £1.40.

Roy Lewis's part-British, part-Canadian story at moments shows promise, and not only geographically, of coming up to Hammond Innes's classic Canadian thriller, *Campbell's Kingdom*. But, as so often in Mr Lewis's stories, something sags in the story-line. The late introduction of the insufficiently important inquiry agent is partly responsible, but so is the insufficiently interesting reason for the cover-up over the engineer-hero's wife's death. But, forgetting Innes and the hope of top standards, this will pass as a competent thriller with high-dam interest.

RUTH RENDELL :
No More Dying Then
191pp. Hutchinson. £1.60.

Ruth Rendell is really first-class, easy, natural and gemütlich in her writing, unhampered in her invention, a natural story-teller who uses crime as conveniently as the Victorian novelists used to, as a tensing part of stories about people. In this one, a provincial policeman has lost his wife and is suffering agonies of deprivation, and a child disappears, not the first to go in this town. Among many good characters, the creation of the destructively indolent Ivor Swan is especially worth praise.

SHELLEY SMITH :
A Grave Affair
223pp. Hamish Hamilton. £1.75.

This Shelley Smith's first novel for ten years, was worth waiting for, being a crime story as much out of the commonly rated patterns as Joan Fleming's are. A decent Cabinet Minister, who, admittedly, has been having an extramarital affair, believes honestly that his present significance justifies covering up a crime which he would be hard put to show not his own. In the end, after unanticipatable complications, only a rough justice is done.

HILARY WAUGH (Editor) :
Merchants of Menace
An anthology of mystery stories by the mystery writers of America.
298pp. Gollancz. £1.80.

Mr Waugh has gone back as far as 1946 for the stories in this collection, and so presents a better range than the usual crop of just this year's cuffs allows. Good representative writers include Colin Fremlin, Ross Macdonald, Donald E. Westlake, and others of like quality.

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